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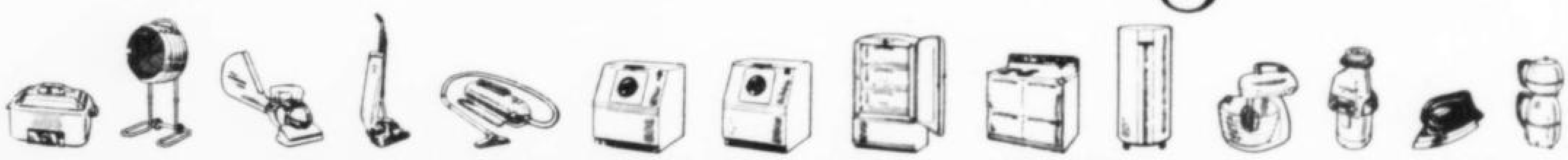

COMMENTARY

THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN ISRAEL'S COLLECTIVES

Pioneering a Socialism Without Regimentation

LEWIS S. FEUER

THERE had been rumors during the 30's of the communal settlements in Palestine. Occasionally, some of us said goodbye to some friend who had been reading Ber Borochov, and who announced one day that for some unaccountable reason he was migrating to a *kibbutz* in Eretz Yisrael. But the writings of Borochov in those days appeared to magnify a minor variable into major proportions; the conventional left-wing movements were more in accord with prevailing political common sense. It was only when Nazism revealed depths of cruelty in men for which rational Marxism had ill prepared a generation, and when it began to be perceived that Five Year Plans were not an all-sufficient answer to the problems of minority peoples, that the rumors of the Palestinian communal settlements were remembered.

What are these settlements? What is their philosophy? Do they teach us something important about a socialist form of life? Are they practicable elsewhere? Do they preserve intellectual freedom and prevent the rise of a bureaucratic class? Will they promote a free and original cultural expression? Are they social experiments which are destined to be short-lived Jewish versions of Brook Farm, and which have already found their Hawthorne in Arthur Koestler?

WHEN Ivan Maisky, Soviet Ambassador to Britain, made a brief wartime visit to some of the collective settlements, he characterized them as "Utopian," by which he meant to say that they were communistic to an extent not yet practicable in the Soviet Union. The word "Utopian," when used by a Marxist, suggests that the given social form cannot be sustained because it is the outcome of ethical aspirations rather than the workings of impersonal historic forces. Nevertheless, here was the impressive reality of one hundred and fifty collective settlements in Israel with their fifty thousand inhabitants. The handful of laborers who had gone out in 1909 to found the first kibbutz at Degania in the Upper Valley of the Jordan, near Lake Tiberias, had set something going which they

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JEREMY BENTHAM, founder of the philosophy of utilitarianism, which preached the "greatest happiness of the greatest number," once drew up a blueprint for a rationally organized prison. In retrospect, it was an ominous symptom: we have seen too many utopias grow into prisons. Are the *kibbutzim* in Israel, which many have hailed as the embodiments of a truly new way of life, doomed to follow the same downward path—or do they offer, as many enthusiasts have avowed, a model for a new form of collective social living? LEWIS S. FEUER, who has visited and lived in several of Israel's collective settlements, here draws up a balance-sheet, finding some signs of internal weakness, but also remarkable evidence of strength and future promise. Mr. Feuer is assistant professor of philosophy at Vassar College. He was born in New York in 1912 and studied at the City College of New York and Harvard University.

could never have foreseen. Sociologists speak of "unanticipated consequences."

The collective settlements, for all their Utopian aspects, have survived just because they were the only possible solution to certain *practical* difficulties. The dream, for once, coincided with the material need. The aim of Zionist colonization was to build permanent Jewish settlements on the soil. This could not be achieved by capitalist plantations, managed by Jews and worked by a native Arab peasantry. Nor could it be achieved by individual farms on the Western model: barren, waterless soil, unrelenting sun, malaria, would have broken the will of the most unyielding individualist. Collective settlement was the only way to redeem the soil. As Joseph Baratz, a founder of Degania, wrote: "Individuals were apt to give way under the strain of the hardships peculiar to Palestine; but cooperative life and work would triumph over everything. . . . This was the basis of the collective village, the *kvutza*. . . . There was nothing dogmatic about their ideal . . . . It had not been borrowed from other lands or other peoples. It had not been dug out of musty volumes. It was an original Palestinian creation. . . ."

The collective settlements, moreover, did not come into being through the destruction of a pre-existent capitalist system. Kibbutz socialism was founded in an economic environment of sub-marginal soil whose negative profit potential would tempt no capitalist investment. The fortifications which the Israelis evacuated during the war exposed the soil's anatomy: at Ein Hashofet, you could see the two or three inches of topsoil, then the limestone. At Kibbutz Dalya they told me how a few years ago they had sent their soil profile to the United States Department of Agriculture with a request for technical advice. The reply came back from Washington that in America such land would be regarded as sub-marginal, and fit only for afforestation. The one branch of agriculture that is profitable is orange cultivation, and it is noteworthy that this has been preempted by capitalist farmers. As opposed to this, the kibbutzim avoid one-crop culture for the export market; they are devoted to mixed farming for home consumption.

At Ein Hashofet, there are the thousand acres that are being cultivated—wheat, barley, corn, cucumbers, potatoes, carrots, eggplants. There are vineyards and plum orchards, beehives to be tended, and ditches to be dug around young trees. In 1940, thirty thousand saplings were planted to help bring forest to the denuded hills; and there are the hundred and thirty cows and calves, the three thousand egg-producing chickens.

EACH collective settlement has its own distinctive character. Some are approached through hills and trees, others through unredeemed lands or cultivated fields. The younger kibbutzim are patchworks of temporary huts and tents; the older ones often have two-storied apartment buildings. The schools and children's houses are constructed with architectural self-consciousness; their cement walls are freshly painted white, and the rooms are airy. Pioneer construction is always vicarious in its satisfactions—destined for the generation ahead.

Ein Hashofet, as I first saw it through a truck window narrowed with armor plate, is middle-aged, as kibbutzim go. It has some well-built apartments, but it also has huts and tents for the newcomers. I had read an account of its history in diary form which Yosef Wilfand had edited, *Ein Hashofet: A Decade of Pioneering*. It was the first collective which had been founded by a predominantly American group, and was named for Justice Brandeis, who had befriended the founders with his advice and support. ("Ein Hashofet" means "The Well of the Judge.") I knew also that Arthur Koestler had lived there while he was gathering the background material for *Thieves in the Night*.

I presented myself toward dinner-time at the Secretary's office in the watch-tower. We then went to find the chairman of the housing committee, who fortunately had available the spare cot of a man who had recently been mobilized. Then we went out to find Yosef Wilfand. We met him at the lawn behind the dining hall where the children and the parents gather to play after dinner. It is the one spot on the settlement which is thick with grass, the arduous achievement of the irrigation sprinklers. Wilfand was playing with his two children. We shook hands. We had been at Harvard at the same time. He wanted to know about old friends and teachers. Wilfand is a teacher on the kibbutz, but he also writes poetry and much literary criticism. He wanted to know what Karl Shapiro was now writing. I said that I'd seen a recent poem of his, "Israel." We then went to find one Shmuel ben Zvi.

WHEN I saw Shmuel, I recognized with amazement a classmate of bygone years at the Downtown Talmud Torah and the City College. I recalled him as he looked in our class yearbook, pale, joyless; beside his picture, there had been no mention of any organization or extra-scholastic activity. Yes, his shoulders had grown broad, his expression was strong and self-confident. His Hebrew had a sonorous firmness unlike that mechanical singsong which, when he recited, used to extinguish the invective of Amos. But it was Samuel Cohen, unmistakably.

We spoke of our common past and this unforeseen encounter in the hills of Ephraim. Then he asked us all to visit him that night at ten o'clock at his home on the "West Side" of the kibbutz. For as Ein Hashofet has grown and prospered, its older members have come to possess a modest "socialist" standard of comfort.

We talked often, that night and others, and I accompanied him with his tractor out into the fields. Shmuel and his wife had a piano in their room, a rifle stood beside it: together a symbol of the present kibbutz generation. Inevitably, I wondered as to the relative wisdom of the roads we had taken. I once asked Wilfand about that. The problem was often on his mind, and he hoped to write a novel about it. "If I'd stayed in America," he said, "I would have struggled for an academic career, maybe in Semitics, but probably wasting my best energies in a contest with unemployment and discrimination. Ein Hashofet has been more constructive, more fruitful. It's even more important than the couple of academic books which I might have written if I'd remained in America." I could not gainsay his decision. I remembered our college generation, drifting with broken friendships during the depression years, entrapped in a competitive morass, and trying to salvage its hope in political self-dedication. How many of them had finally emerged old, friendless, disillusioned men, who settled for a living, and packed away their ideals with their schoolbooks.

The socialist in American society is a person whose deepest impulses are frustrated; life casts him in the role of perpetual opposition, for he cannot live the life he advocates. The kibbutz socialists, at the minimum, are living the life they believe in. Outsiders always find something naive, almost 1910-ish, about the way they take their socialism, like simple believers in a creed, who haven't kept up with the later heterodoxies. But this naivety is only apparent; it is the simplicity of those who can live in action which corresponds to their ideas, and who are not impelled by contradictions to make their ideology endlessly complicated.

EDWIN Samuel has defined a kibbutz as "a communal group which pools its earnings and keeps a common household; is permanently settled; and is primarily engaged in agriculture." The extreme communism which underlies the kibbutz is reflected in the fact that it is the only social institution in the world which conducts its accounting in accordance with the labor theory of value. Any man's work counts as much as any other's. If some given branch of production is more profitable than another, labor is re-allocated toward the more profitable work. Equality in the distribution of goods and services remains the norm, and in the kibbutz you must forget the economics which evaluates men in terms of their respective productivities. The communal dining hall, the *hadar haochel,* is the visible embodiment of socialism. It is generally the most spacious building, and in the evenings it serves as a theater and meeting place. During the day, all share the same food, weighted generally toward bread, fish, and vegetables. The war made meat scarce. Women servers roll their carts down the aisle handing out the dishes. Sometimes the noise grows so that you are reminded rather too much of a cross between an army messhall and a Horn and Hardart cafeteria.

In the evening, the noisy cafeteria becomes a chamber of government. Kibbutz democracy is most akin to the primal democracy of the New England town meeting. Once or twice a week, the general meeting takes place. It is the supreme governing body of the kibbutz, and is made up of all the members of the collective. The general meeting votes the annual budget, elects the members of committees, and considers appeals from committee decisions. The debates can grow long and intense over such questions as: shall we get another tractor? shall we build instead a new school? or should we rather invest in cow-milking machinery? Most decisions, however, are made by committees, and kibbutz government could in large measure be described as government by committees. The list varies from one kibbutz to another, but it generally includes health, social affairs, cultural activities, personal affairs, economics, education, and housing. About half the membership of the average settlement is generally serving on some committee. The functions of the committee are well suggested by their names, except perhaps "personal affairs." This committee handles such questions as arranging vacations for members, and finding accommodations for a member who wishes to get married or bring his aged parents to the settlement.

There is, in addition, the secretariat, or committee of management. It usually includes a full-time secretary—the organizer of the labor schedule—and a representative for external relations. The members of the secretariat have no special privileges; they continue to do their full day's work in field, factory, kitchen, or school. The secretary is not a high policy-making official, nor is his post one for the concentration of powers. He is rather a bookkeeper and information agent. The kibbutz is especially concerned to prevent the rise of a permanent bureaucracy. Positions are rotated, and members are drafted for the additional responsibilities of public service. There are managers, of course, of particular branches of enterprise, as for instance, the orchards, beehives, or tractor repair station. But there is no managerial class. The "manager" is simply the more experienced or skilled man, who works together with his fellows. He has no special prerogatives, and his food, shelter, and clothing are identical with that of all the *chaverim.*

The distribution of power and responsibility safeguards kibbutz democracy, but it has likewise the effect of absorbing the member's life and time into a succession of committee meetings. When you add the general meetings each week to the special committee sessions, and superimpose your night of guard duty, you are lucky to come out with one free evening. The kibbutz is a group of people who work together, talk together, eat together, think together, and play together, and those who wish to dwell within themselves will rebel somewhere against the kibbutz Leviathan.

It is more than a socialist economy, more than a solution to the problems of capitalist depression and unemployment that the people of the kibbutzim seek. They aspire toward a new way of life, a new type of personality that will be integrated with the collectivity by roots deep in the unconscious.

The transformation is hard, even for those who have undergone the years of psychological preparation and mutual sharing of the Hashomer Hatzair movement. At Ein Hashofet, there was a *gareen* ("seed," i.e., nucleus of a kibbutz) of fifty young men and women. They described how hard it was to learn to respond spontaneously in terms of collective rather than individual advantage.

All rejected the capitalist competitive system, but there seemed also to be a vague suspicion that the collective society might have a tendency to abnegate the individual. William James once wrote how the individual self is linked in expression to the clothes we wear, which somehow partake of our character. What happens to this self in the many kibbutzim where clothing is communal —the shirt, the trousers, picked up at random from the weekly laundry? Is there an intractable component within us which resists leveling to a common denominator, something which would have the community recognize the impulse in men to be uncommon?

One meets in Israel those who have chosen to leave the collectives rather than endure the strain of adjustment. One such couple told me their story. They had lived in a kibbutz which was composed of American and Eastern European Jews. There was interminable strife which arose from past backgrounds. The Americans advocated an outlay of forty pounds a year on toilet tissue. The Europeans thought newspapers good enough for this purpose. The Americans wanted hot showers; the Europeans were content with cold showers, and only acquiesced when sickness began to take its toll. The Americans took their political discussions with some detachment and liberality of spirit; they could not understand the absolute commitment upon which the Europeans insisted. Was politics an instrument for men's use, or was it an ideological god before whom one must do obeisance? There was likewise dissatisfaction with the lot of women on the communal settlements. By and large, women are still tied to domestic work, the kitchen, the laundry, the nursery. Does such work in the kibbutz bring with it the personal joy of serving one's family which is the reward of the housewife? Furthermore, the couple told me, their child had never been so happy in the kibbutz as he now was with the personal care and affection of his parents.

A curious kind of conservatism is likewise developing in the communal settlements which sometimes provokes a conflict of generations. When the kibbutzim were founded, many were boldly experimental; their experimentation did not exclude forms alternative to the Western monogamous family. With maturity, however, a specific mode of kibbutz conventionality has arisen. This led in one case to amusing controversies between the established members and the *gareen* in training. Yes, said the older women, it's all right for the girls to wear shorts, but they should put rubber bands about them so that they do not hang loosely around the thighs. Also, they should wear shorts different from those of the men. The big pockets on girls' shorts aroused the especial ire of their elders; they seemed somehow too suggestive, too masculine, or too inviting. It was intimated that sweaters should not give such prominence to the breasts, and that their colors should not be calculated to attract attention. The kibbutz newspaper devoted several columns and cartoons to ridicule of the newcomers' ways.

The male newcomers likewise had their troubles with the agrarian traditionalism of the kibbutz. They would suggest more efficient methods of ditch-digging, easier ways of working with barbed wire; they proposed such innovations as the use of DDT in the tents. But the old-timers were quite content with the way things were done, and reluctant to entertain suggestions from the fledglings. The oldsters were men and women of thirty-five to forty years of age, with children aged up to about ten or twelve. The oldsters were eager to have the young people in their twenties join the kibbutz, and fill the intervening age-gap of the generations. But the newcomers would have none of it. They preferred to go out on their own and build their own communal settlement. The kibbutz is a sort of socialist pioneering cell; it multiplies by fission. The intra-tribal tensions within the kibbutz are part of the generative process.

The communal settlements are courageous enough to recognize that kibbutz life has its frustrations. Six years ago Am Oved, the publishing house of Histadrut, issued the novel *Maagalot* ("Circles") by David Maletz,*

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*Published last month in English by Schocken Books under the title *Young Hearts*.

a member of the kibbutz Ein Harod. The novel's hero, Menahemke, is overwhelmed by the endless vacuity of kibbutz life; he sees it as a microcosm peopled with lost souls. His refuge is his tent, and for him and Chanke, his wife, it shuts out a world "petty, noisy, full of shadows and darkness." He watches his children grow as children of the kibbutz, and at the end, he and his wife dare to hope that they have done wisely. Maletz's novel had a tremendous impact on kibbutz opinion. There were numerous debates, and the author defended his work at public gatherings. At Ein Harod, the discussion lasted six days

The issue between "individualists" and "organicists" on the kibbutzim is an unresolved one, and each settlement works out a proximate solution for itself. On some collectives, even private gifts of radios and books are absorbed into a communal pool, and rotated among the members. Most settlements, however, allow this degree of private ownership. Some persons urge measures for more individual family life, and would have the children live together with their parents. Others, on the contrary, believe that an over-close family life would interfere with the communal spirit of the kibbutz. There are exponents likewise of a greater freedom of consumers' choice who argue for some method whereby a non-smoker, for instance, would be provided with an alternative luxury. The moneyless kibbutz economy makes for a rigidity in the available satisfactions.

THE communal settlements have often been criticized for their tendency towards "ideological collectivism." Berl Katznelson, the spiritual father of Mapai, saw especially the danger of a neopatriarchal society arising within the kibbutz; the secretariat would, under such an order, assume the role of a tribal father, and the communal settlement might then be regarded as a digression of historical socialism toward a neotribal society. Now it is unquestionable that every collective system has within it a potential for totalitarian control. As a matter of actual fact, the development of kibbutz life seems thus far to have effectively counteracted any such tendency.

The principal guarantee against authoritarian power is, of course, the wholly voluntary character of kibbutz membership. A person can leave, go to the cities, try private farming, or join another kibbutz. Israeli society has the plural possibilities of an expanding economy, and pluralism is a safeguard for freedom within a socialist framework, too.

The charge of dictated uniformity of thought has been brought especially against the fifty settlements of the Hashomer Hatzair, which is officially committed to the Marxian philosophy. In practice, however, I found a wide diversity of opinion, freely expressed. At Gan Shmuel, there were Habonim adherents who argued that the class struggle ideology had little relevance to the concrete situation of Israel. Many kibbutz members are extremely critical of basic traits of the Soviet society. At Ein Hashofet, I met a man and wife who adhered to Trotskyist views. Although they were among the founders of the kibbutz, they applied their political creed in rigid criticism of communal settlements: the kibbutz, they insisted, was un-Marxist because it withdrew its members from the class struggle. The kibbutz, from their standpoint, was essentially a petty-bourgeois institution, for it consisted of a group which owned its own means of production within a predominantly capitalist economy. I heard of no attempt to interfere with the free expression of their ideas, and they were respected members of the kibbutz.

ARE the communal settlements here to stay? Or are they destined to flourish briefly like an exotic hothouse plant? We can speak today of "permanent" institutions only in a relative and qualified sense; the 20th century has a predilection for making all things seem transient "events." With this qualification we may then acknowledge that what many persons regarded as solely a temporary expedient for Zionist colonization has shown itself to have latent, unsuspected power for survival as a permanent social life.

The most crucial evidence on this question is to be found in the decisions of children who were born and matured on kibbutzim. Such statistics as I was able to gather indicated that the second generation has almost without exception chosen to live on communal settlements.

When a youngster reaches the age of seventeen, it is customary among most kibbutzim to send him to live and work in the city for one year. He is thus enabled to decide upon his way of life more intelligently. "Capitalist civilization" seems, however, to have small attraction for the youth of the kibbutzim. Of the fifty children, for instance, who have grown to maturity at the settlement Yagur, all have elected to remain and become full members of the kibbutz. Yagur is affiliated with Hakibbutz Hameuhad, the more moderate grouping of about sixty settlements which does not require a special ideological preparation of its members. It was founded in 1923 by twenty men and women. Today it numbers one thousand five hundred. I spoke with one of the surviving three founders, a cheerful little gray man. The dining hall was painted with murals, nearby were the new two-storied school buildings with their sculptured walls. The little gray man looked at the farm city which had grown from his work and his friends', and one sensed in him that assurance of permanence which comes from the artist's knowledge of achievement. It was the same at Gan Shmuel where in recent years ten native children have all elected to join the kibbutz; of these, two joined the settlement despite the fact that their parents had themselves chosen to leave.

TO ACHIEVE social permanence, the communal settlements look naturally to an educational method which will bring forth a generation which feels and thinks communally. The children, as is well known, live in their own houses, apart from their parents. Children's houses were originally instituted as a labor-saving device. The kibbutzim needed the labor of their women, and what was at first a communal nursery or baby-sitting arrangement gradually became a distinctive method of upbringing. At Ein Hashofet, for instance, the small babies are cared for in the Bayith Tinakot. There are three pre-school houses through which the child goes in accordance with age. Then there are three buildings for the children of the elementary school, each with its own classroom, dining hall, and sleeping quarters. The children grow and act as a group.

The practical educational methods are ultra-progressive. One teacher who had studied for a year at Columbia Teachers' College boasted that the principles of progressive education could really be applied only in the communal settlements. The teacher sets projects for the class which are then executed collectively. Each project takes several weeks, and its final product is the collective notebook, in whose composition and illustration each child participates. I examined several of the notebooks which the children eight to nine years old had composed at Ein Hashofet. They were done with artistry, and their titles indicate the sources of the "sabra's" thinking. There was *A History of May Day* which described the class struggles of the past, with tables and graphs to make the economic statistics vivid; it included a child's drawing of Karl Marx, and finally answered the question: why do we celebrate May Day? The Passover Haggadah, with its four questions, had metamorphosed into a Marxian Haggadah with one. Another notebook was devoted to water, with sections on its chemistry, geographic distribution, biologic significance, and agricultural importance; it portrayed Israel's unending preoccupation with water in its struggle for life.

The formal content of kibbutz education is centered around nature study and social history. When the children are adolescent, they look for guidance, like the *gareen,* to United States Department of Agriculture yearbooks, manuals on crops, bees, and automobile mechanics. These are the books which you see on school shelves; the Talmud will gather dust in the settlements. And the favorite magazines of their childhood are old *National Geographic* copies. The chief emotive aim of kibbutz education is to make every child feel that he has his place in the communal scheme of things, to think and respond communally. As one teacher at Gan Shmuel told me: "We don't leave back pupils. If a child is deficient in mathematics, we try to have him counterbalance with proficiency in some subject like history." Unlike our American elementary schools, the emphasis is on what you can do for the collectivity; there is a minimum of miniature competitive struggle among the children.

To the kibbutzim, the "sabra," the native-born youth, is their highest achievement, vigorous, self-reliant, cheerful, and unafraid. Critics regard him as uncultured and severed from two thousand years of historical experience of his people. The kibbutz teachers, in reply, point to the soldiers of the Palmach, the graduates of their children's houses.

The teachers are, however, themselves perturbed by certain problems. Their methods of education have not been successful in the teaching of mathematics and foreign languages. During past years, the emotional resistance against the learning of English has been severe. More important, they find it hard to impart a humane, liberal internationalist philosophy to the new generation. The sabras hate the Arabs, and were glad to see the left-wing kibbutzim finally give up their policy of bi-nationalism. The children play at killing Arabs, and invent swear words and expressions of their own: "Get killed by an Arab!" "I am Trumpeldor, you are a Bedouin." And the child who protests against being left out says: "I'm not an Arab. *Ani lo noladti b'bayith nabala.*"

Hatred of the foreigner, as Freud emphasized, can serve to unify a communistic society; aggressive tendencies can be deployed from within the group toward the outsider. To the older generation, this matter is one for sadness and puzzlement. But the children perceive that in the world about them force is the instrument of survival. At Gan Shmuel, there were twenty orphans of Yad Mordechai, the kibbutz named after the commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Fighting Forces and composed of its survivors. Their teacher told me she felt academic and unconvincing when she spoke to these children of social justice. Their cradles have been death and fire, and their milk has come wrapped in war's flames.

The teachers, as fresh-minded practitioners of the Freudian psychology, feel that the children's communal houses are the foundation of a healthy personality. They believe that the Oedipus complex in the kibbutzim has been reduced to trivial proportions. The child suffers from no fear of insecurity in its relationship to parents; it lives apart from any atmosphere of family quarrels, and it meets its parents as an equal during playtime. The elders in turn are spared sleepless nights of child care, and needn't worry about the safety and comfort of their children.

The psychoanalytic uniqueness of the children's houses is, however, easily exaggerated. The children at times show an intense identification with their parents, seeking them out at mealtime to sit with in the dining hall. They ask the newcomer, *"Shel mi at?"*—"To whom do you belong?" And they speak of their parents' room as their own, *"heder sheli,"* in contradistinction to their children's house. Almost all the babies were thumb-suckers; this was extremely noticeable in the crib rows of the kibbutzim. Whether this signified an emotional insecurity which arose because of the lack of maternal fondling and caressing I wouldn't know. And even the collectivity cannot make up for the death of a parent with its attendant anxiety. At Gan Shmuel, a little girl happened not to receive her share of a watermelon. She wept and said it was "because my father is dead."

The communal settlements, especially those of the Hashomer Hatzair, are often described as Marxist in their philosophy. There is no doubt that Marx fills an honored place among the great in the kibbutz ideology, and the Kibbutz Artzi settlements do describe themselves self-consciously as Marxist. Nevertheless, I think the characterization of the kibbutzim as Marxist is a misleading one; their active theory and practice have little relationship to Marxism as it is defined today.

Marxian doctrine challenges the very basis of life as the kibbutz conceives it. Stalin once asked sardonically, "What sort of nation, for instance, is a Jewish nation that consists of Georgian, Daghestanian, Russian, American, and other Jews, the members of which do not understand each other. . . ?" It is just such a nation out of such components which the kibbutzim aim to create. Stalin regarded it as a mistake to stress the psychological situation and problems of Jewish existence, but to the mind of the communal settlements, these are the variables which make the difference between the frustrated and the creative life. A prominent member of Kibbutz Merhavia, which adheres to the Hashomer philosophy, stated succinctly: "One can be a Marxist, but one must not cease to be a man."

More congenial to the ethos of the kibbutzim is the philosophy of A. D. Gordon, a thinker of Tolstoyan cast who in his middle age sought his salvation in agricultural work. Gordon became the sage of Degania, and his "religion of labor" expressed the mystic identification of the kibbutz with its soil. Work was man's creative union with Nature, the means by which he became part of her living organism. At Ein Hashofet, they remembered Ussishkin's advice not to splash their affection all over Eretz Yisrael, but to stick to their bit of soil and work. And this labor-mysticism of nature permeates the attitude of reverence with which they speak of each blade of grass, each sapling, as a unique creation of their own. A member of Kfar Menahem made it the basis of his rejection of the terrorist ideology: "We ask: what have they created? Have they founded any kibbutzim? Have they planted a single seed, a single blade of grass?" It is this same apotheosis of the worker on the soil that likewise separates the kibbutz philosophy from the Marxian. Marx spoke of the peasantry as a "reactionary class," and had no emotional attachment to the "idiocy of rural life." Contrast this with the Gordon who writes that the regeneration of the Jewish people "must begin at the very source of life, at the very roots of *nature* itself."

Although the Marxian values are alien to their life, the kibbutzim, nevertheless, in their *social structure* come close to a realization of communism as Lenin defined it. Lenin's vision was that of an order in which "primitive democracy" would be revived, in which "the mass of the population rises to independent participation, not only in voting and elections, but also in the everyday administration of affairs." Kibbutz democracy does approximate this conception of communism; the community participates collectively and directly in its accounting and administration, without the mediation of a managerial class with its attendant inequalities. But Lenin would have disowned this communism which arose not through a revolutionary seizure of the state apparatus, but through the creation *de novo* of a voluntary, communal society.

IN THE last analysis, the communal settlements of Israel come about as close as anything can to the scheme of life which Kropotkin advocated. There are the decentralized, autonomous communes, banded together voluntarily into free associations of settlements; there is the use of cooperative bodies as the agencies for selling the kibbutz products and for securing the kibbutz purchases, the Tnuva and the Hamashbir Hamerkazi. The state has played no part in the foundation of kibbutz socialism; the motive power has been what Kropotkin called "free agreement."

The kibbutzim, furthermore, are essaying the decentralized combination of industry with agriculture which was one of Kropotkin's chief ideas. Walter Lowdermilk, the eminent expert on conservation, regarded this union as Palestine's most important social achievement. At Afikim, there is the Kelet factory which employs fifty men in the manufacture of boxes and plywood, the only factory of its kind in the Middle East. Dalya has a factory that makes water meters, irrigation switches, and precision equipment; it employs twenty-five men. A furniture factory at Ramath Hashofet has a considerable output in modern styles. Such factories are becoming usual in the kibbutzim. They make possible a more economic use of labor, and they help overcome the traditional antagonism between town and country.

The communal settlements deal with the problems of political representatives in ways reminiscent of Kropotkin's proposals. The kibbutzim try to prevent the rise of a professional political class by maintaining a close linkage between political representatives and the settlements of which they are members. Three-fourths of the kibbutzim, including all those comprised in the federations of Hashomer Hatzair and the Hakibbutz Hameuhad, joined in 1948 to found the United Workers' Party of Israel (Mapam). The political leaders of this party are, for the most part, members of communal settlements who are assigned on the daily kibbutz work-schedule to temporary external duty. The first Cabinet of the state of Israel thus included Mordechai Bentov, Minister of Labor, and member of Kibbutz Mishmar Haemek, a settlement which has achieved remarkable results in secondary education. The Minister of Agriculture was Aharon Zisling, member of Kibbutz Ein Harod, where he participated in large projects of scientific farming. The assistant in charge of fisheries came similarly from the fishing kibbutz at Caesarea.

The kibbutzim choose their politicians and journalists with the fullness of judgment which comes from years of shared work. The antics of political advertising and ego-enhancement, which are commonplace to American practice, have small room for development on the communal settlements. When the Sabbath approaches in Tel Aviv, the kibbutz's political members rush back to their kibbutzim to resume their place in the dining hall, to review their permanent problems as farmers, cattlemen, or teachers, and to give a talk in the evening on what is going on in the government. Then follows the inevitable *sicha* (discussion), Israel's favorite pastime, with argument and counter-argument. Kibbutz democracy does not encourage the growth of a political bureaucracy.

THE Marxian criticism of the communal settlements as Utopian has its counterpart oddly enough in the writings of Arthur Koestler. This distinguished novelist regards the kibbutz as the socialism of naive, backward backwoodsmen who are developing a society of anti-intellectuals. Koestler spent two weeks at Ein Hashofet while he was gathering the background for the novel *Thieves in the Night,* and in appreciation, he included a dedication to two of its members. The kibbutz admired his brilliance, and listened intently to the lectures he gave on modern authors, Winston Churchill, and the bombing of Britain. But there was considerable suspicion of him because of his past association with the extremist Revisionist movement. The kibbutz diary at the time speaks of the visit of "the all-seeing, all-knowing, all-distorting writer, Arthur Koestler. . . . He looked into everything, took part in everything, and asked a lot of questions . . . there's good reason to doubt whether an outsider, spending a few days each in one kibbutz after another, can handle the most basic and cardinal aspects of our existence without messing it up, the more so since the 'nihilist' who wrote *The Yogi and the Commissar* is handicapped in any attempt to understand a system of social values based on a belief in creative, communal socialism."

Koestler's novel naturally aroused resentmen in the kibbutzim. They felt he had never understood their philosophy, that no real kibbutznik would, as did Koestler's hero, throw his lot in with the terrorists. They maintained that Koestler had projected his own amoral sadism into kibbutz life. They challenged the accuracy of his observation, and demanded to know on which settlements he had seen the kibbutz leaders interfere in the intimate marital questions of their members' lives. The women of the settlements felt that he had pandered to vulgar tastes by depicting their membership as the outcome of sexual defeat. They observed that they weren't all ugly and fat. When Koestler revisited Ein Hashofet last year, he was coldly received. He asked for an explanation, and when one friend told him why, he exclaimed: "All because of a book?"

Koestler's report ignores the integral and growing part played by the arts and the sciences in kibbutz life. Several nights a week, the cultural committees of the settlements present concerts, recitals, lectures, plays, or motion pictures. The associations of the settlements secure the services of artists, writers, and lecturers on a cooperative basis. Leah Goldberg, a poetess and critic of great sensitivity, has thus lectured often on contemporary literature and read from her own work to many of the kibbutzim.

During a few weeks in the settlements, I heard more singing and saw more dancing than I had during several years in the United States. And where else will the farmers and the cobblers discuss with you the verse forms of a poet like Shlonsky or the literary criticism of *Al-Hamishmar*? One kibbutz, perceiving great musical talent in one of its members, sent her to study in Jerusalem; they took care of her child at home.

The associations of settlements also have their own cooperative publishing houses and literary magazines. The Workers' Book Guild, Sifriat Hapoalim, recently celebrated its tenth anniversary as the publishing house of Hashomer Hatzair. During 1947, it sold one hundred and fifty thousand copies of its books, a stupendous per capita figure. Besides publishing translations of Freud, Tolstoy, Otto Bauer, Marx, and Lenin, it has provided an outlet for the younger generation of Israeli writers. It is indeed a workers' cooperative—fifty per cent of its subscribers are workers, part of an audience which reads Rosa Luxemburg, Garcia Lorca, and Hemingway's *Lemi Tziltzilu Hapaamonim* ("For Whom the Bell Tolls"), with its stark Goya jacket.

On Sabbath eve, when the dining hall takes on a new dignity, the cultural committee places on exhibition its new acquisitions of volumes for the library, beautiful editions, and it is like a ritualistic return to see Freud and Marx take their place with the Hebrew prophets, their revolutionary ideas finding an ancestral medium in the patriarchal language of Isaiah.

KIBBUTZ socialism is only one segment within Israeli economy and the balance of the various segments is unstable. There are certain factors external to the kibbutzim which help make them possible: the workings of the Jewish National Fund are in effect equivalent to a system of land nationalization, and the kibbutzim have besides the assistance of loans at a low rate of interest; a large labor movement is friendly to its philosophy, and its marketing is done through the cooperative movement. But overshadowing all, there is the significance of the kibbutzniks themselves, the generation of young men and women who chose voluntarily to "proletarianize" themselves, and to become workers of the soil—a phenomenon that seems to defy the orderly formulas of the sociology textbooks, and would be hard to duplicate elsewhere. Perhaps the pattern of communal settlement would be adaptable, as Garcia Granados suggests, to the tribal societies of the world's backward areas. Be that as it may, the kibbutz form will, in all likelihood, be used only in peripheral cases as a mode of socialist organization. It takes an unusual coincidence of conditions to produce a generation of young intellectual men and women who wish to dedicate themselves to a communal, pioneer agricultural life.

Nevertheless, the Israeli communal settlements are more than a sociological folktale. Their solitary example keeps alive in the world the hope that a socialist society can be one of freedom and development, and they are at least an experimental demonstration of how the socialist form can be a means to the achievement of human values. When you get on a truck and drive from the kibbutz to the city, you have the sense of leaving some astounding non-Euclidean planet to return to the pedestrian surfaces of the existing order; you become aware again, as the economic nexus replaces the communal association, of a world where money must intervene between you and all your acts.

JEWISH IDENTITY IN A FREE SOCIETY

On Current Efforts to Enforce "Total Commitment"

HAROLD ROSENBERG

> *What have I in common with Jews? I have hardly anything in common with myself.*
>
> —Franz Kafka

FEW of us are duplicates of our grandfathers, in either thought, feeling, speech, or appearance. Very often we even differ from our fathers, too, in most of these respects. We are, to a large extent, new people—as everything in America, and in many other parts of the world, tends, for better or worse, to be new.

To be new means to lack a given identity, to be, in the deepest sense, anonymous. We can "make a name for ourselves." But until we have done so we are "nobody," atoms of that featureless mass which certain journalists condescendingly term "the little people." Quite a different matter from being born labeled with the name of a ready-made entity, like the ancient family or the aristocrat's estate.

Our anonymity has gone so far that it often seems complete. Thus certain contemporary philosophers have boldly asserted that man *is* not but *makes* himself. And to the degree that modern man begins without a given identity, it is true that he becomes somebody only through the act by which he projects himself into the future. Whatever he is to be, will be the result of his self-creation or his choice—whether he defines himself as something unique through original activity or in terms of the collective self of some group or tradition to which he elects to adhere. One might say that in our time man has a *naturalized* ego; it is not native to him; he has acquired it as an immigrant acquires citizenship in the country of his option.

In this ability to choose who we shall be, we possess a kind of freedom never known before. Not only have we the freedom to decide and to act; by making the very self who is to decide for us, we replace nature and tradition and, like the First Maker, create man in the image we desire.

If this new, modern anonymity, and the freedom that accompanies it, were actually brought to fulfillment, all fixed differences in people would be dissolved. There would be no Jews, no Frenchmen, no Catholics, except insofar as individuals elected to make themselves Jews, Frenchmen, or Catholics. Even racial identifications, such as kinky hair or a long nose, would be eliminated as an insufferable obstacle to free decision. Humanity would appear as a raw material, physical and mental—from which individuals

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IN THE intense preoccupation with Jewish survival prevalent in many quarters, partisan ideologists have been having a field day. The simple statement, acceptable for centuries, "I am a Jew," is no longer felt to be enough: unless one can testify to a "total commitment" or a firm affiliation with this or that set of principles or this or that program or organization, one may find one's right to call oneself a Jew questioned—and one's right to speak or write as a Jew challenged. To HAROLD ROSENBERG this new trend in Jewish life seems as unsatisfactory as it is arbitrary, and in this essay he suggests that in a free society each man's own sense of his Jewishness as he experiences it and voluntarily expresses it may be both more authentic for himself, and more fruitful for the future of Judaism and the Jews, than a prescribed article of faith, pledges of loyalty, or enforced subservience of the individual personality to the group. Mr. Rosenberg is a frequent contributor to this magazine; his most recent article was "The Communist" in the July 1949 issue. He is the author of a volume of poetry, *Trance Above the Streets,* and of numerous articles on literary and philosophical subjects. Mr. Rosenberg was born in Brooklyn in 1906, and was graduated from City College and Brooklyn Law School. He is at present writing a book critically examining the philosophy of Marxism.

would be constantly fabricating selves according to their tastes. A fantasy? Perhaps. But the curl of the hair and dimensions of the nose already offer no insuperable problem to our power over nature and our will to make ourselves what we wish to be. As for national and religious colorations, more than one has during the past century in America ebbed into a common gray.

Yet, though full anonymity may be man's ultimate fate, we have not yet arrived at it—and perhaps, despite apparent trends, we never shall. It may even be that, for all the difficulty (and the "absurdity") of being something we have not chosen, we do not want to arrive at it. Not everyone would, like Bernard in André Gide's *The Counterfeiters,* react with enthusiasm to the discovery that he is illegitimate, hence born with a clean slate.

But even those who do want a clean slate usually find that some particular form has been rather heavily, if not ineradicably, engraved upon them. Be it preferred or not, we are not altogether Nobody. Nevertheless, we are not altogether Somebody either. We are anonymous enough to have to make ourselves; yet we *are,* too, and cannot make ourselves in utter freedom. Thus the problem of the *voluntary* aspect of modern identity is definitely upon us, even if we lack its solution.

As is usual with metaphysical problems, this issue of what we are and what we shall choose to be presents itself among Jews in an immediately practical, not to say painful, form. Almost every shade of Jewish opinion recognizes that being a Jew is no longer settled in any positive sense by the fact that one was born a Jew—as it was in those times and in those circumstances when being born a Jew meant being a scarcely alterable copy of one's father, and through him a member of a series of replicas extending backwards into the past as far as one could imagine. Today, Jewish origin does not necessarily establish anything definite in common with other Jews, either past or present. There are still Jews, though probably fewer than there were before the crisis of the past decade, to whom all other Jews are strangers. More important—even when Jewish parenthood does give us something in common, that something is not all there is to us, nor even, often, a very large part of us. In most of us there is an area, frequently much larger than our Jewishness, in which we go our own anonymous ways or along a common road with non-Jews. Being born a Jew does not save us from—or, if you prefer, deprive us of—the modern condition of freedom to make ourselves according to an image we choose. Jewish birth may confer an identity upon us that is quite empty of content, a mere external title applied by others. Perhaps American Jews, to the discomfiture of assimilationists, are born with less group anonymity than most other Americans. Still it must be granted that they tend to be born with at least as much anonymity as Jewishness. And this anonymity goes along with them as a constant possibility of ceasing to be Jewish to a greater or lesser degree.

The new anonymity of the human being, whether as a fact or as a possibility, puts an enormous emphasis on the act of defining oneself. To a man who feels himself to be nothing in particular, it may come to seem highly desirable, especially in those crises where the meaning of his life is put into question, to be able to say decisively and once for all, I am *this.* By assuming himself to be a single thing, he will have overcome the porousness of modern personality. His enlistment in a given ego promises him clarity of outline and fullness of purpose. By his conscious act, provided it has committed him completely, he seems to have achieved that firm inner coherence which men of former times derived from a lifetime of largely automatic responses to tradition and code.

Is not the basic attraction in our time of orthodoxy and totalitarian philosophies, including nationalism, to be found in the relief they offer from anonymity and multiple identity? Not only do they supply to the individual a super-personal collective "I" and a role in a continuing enterprise; by assigning him his place within a whole they eliminate in him the gnawing recognition of the free man that by a new act he can change himself into something else. People freely choose to subject themselves to totalitarian disciplines in order to be something—perhaps even more, however, in order to quiet the anguish of possibility. As T. S. Eliot testified when he made himself an Anglo-Catholic: "Because I do not hope to turn again." Did he mean to reveal in that "because" that it was not so much the Church that drew him as the desire to be irrevocably fixed and no longer tempted to turn? To close the question of identity brings rest to the soul.

Isn't it the presence of the same modern impulse to be one who is one-hundred-per-cent-something that makes Jews so uncomfortable when they debate whether one can be both an American and a Jew? In comparison with the apparently single identification of others, being twice identified seems embarrassingly ambiguous. It is not the *fact* that counts here, the fact that there is "room" in the contemporary human being to be many things and nothing, and that being an American means being free precisely in that the American possesses that room, and can keep multiplying and transforming himself without regarding his deepest "I" as set by his nationality. What creates the embarrassment is not any actual, greater singleness among non-Jewish Americans than among Jews but the prevalent *ideology* of total choice with its exclusion of the *possibility* of being anything else.

Those who have committed themselves feel morally superior to those who remain more or less undefined. The party member feels morally superior to the fellow-traveler or liberal, the practicing Catholic to the person who is simply religious. Moral systems have grown up in the past century in which attachment to some corporate entity is the entire basis of judgment—the individual is measured not by his personal character but by the temperature of his allegiance. In the kind of moral universe thus created, he who has not attached himself to some floating body of value has no recognizable moral status. He is an outsider. And since he does not assume any obligation to plan for the community as a whole, he has no right, it is claimed, to speak concerning the human situation of those who belong to it, including himself.

THIS declaration of no rights for the non-committed individual was illustrated in recent criticisms of certain Jewish writers-in-English made by the Yiddish press and various institutional leaders. It is of primary significance that, though varying in tone and aim, the criticism of these writers rested in every case on one point: that they were on the wrong side in a conflict that exists between the individual as individual and what one rabbi referred to as "the organized group." Specific works of the writers under attack were not analyzed. It seemed enough to charge that they were isolated intellectuals writing about their own thoughts and feelings as Jews and without community aspirations. From this it followed that they were detached from the Jewish mass, ignorant of its hopes and values, callous to its sentiments, and unconcerned about its future. Their "negativity" toward the group could only result, it was asserted, in dislike and contempt (stimulated by self-contempt) for Jewish character and custom. Hence these Jews who have ventured to write about themselves as Jews, but who have only chosen to make themselves into Jews to the extent that they *are* Jews, were disqualified to speak of the Jewish situation. One eminent rabbi summed up the case by pointing out that while criticism of Jewish life and tradition is always welcome, such criticism ought to be constructive criticism—but that constructive criticism could not come from the detached individual, since he is "rootless" and without commitment to "the Jewish enterprise." Needless to add, the rabbi concluded by urging a turn toward such a commitment.

Now it is undeniable that there are individual Jews, even Jews who write about their experience of Jewishness, whose tastes, sense of humor, ideas of what is important, are vastly different from those of the Yiddish-speaking mass or of any organized group of Jews in America. Such Jews may even find themselves amused or attracted by what offends other Jews. And a "cultural" separation of individuals from the mass of this magnitude is an extremely serious matter. It indicates that the collective identity has been disintegrating into its component parts, or perhaps changing into something else. Who knows under such circumstances where the decomposition will disclose itself next? Any family may suddenly discover that it is harboring a stranger.

But is the morality of commitment the best way of meeting the crisis of disintegrating modern collective identities? If the "rootless" intellectuals are not interested in the Yiddish press and the rabbis, is it necessarily because they are defeatist and destructive people who need to be called to order? Isn't it possible that they are not interested because those other intellectuals (and, after all, the Yiddish writers and the American rabbis, however much they may pretend to be the very body of Judaism, are today only professionals representing particular points of view) are simply not interesting? The fact is that a tremendous number of young Jews cease to listen to these voices and that they separate themselves as quickly as they can from Jewish life. Experience would hardly indicate that continuing to insist that the Jewish collective "I" ought to be considered, as a matter of duty, as the basic reality of the life of the individual, will reverse this trend. On the other hand, some of those same young Jews have arrested their flight from Judaism at least long enough to read the studies written by the rootless ones, and to that extent at any rate have accepted themselves as Jews. Of course, nobody knows what value this has. But it does suggest that the morality of commitment may not be as constructive, nor the self-examination and doubts of the isolated intellectual as destructive, as might seem at first glance. At any rate, the test of programs of commitment is not to be found in the presumed low moral character of the "individualists" but in the long-range effect of these programs on the mass of American Jews.

If there were a Jewish community in the old sense, and with Jewish identity established beyond question by one's membership in that community, to be anything less than a total Jew would be an individual aberration. Such, however, is plainly not the case with us, when Jewish identity is so much a matter of acts of the will and intellect. Since it is a matter of seeking one's identity within an open community, the perspective of the semi-outsider also has its validity, and it might be a great loss to exclude him more than he has excluded himself. It is easy enough to tell him: you may criticize, but make sure your criticism is constructive criticism, that it contributes toward building the Jewish community. But that is begging the question, which is: given the present condition of the Jewish community, is it always known what will be constructive and what destructive?

There is the story of the Hasidic rabbi who said to another Hasid, I have more learning than you and more righteousness—how is it that so many come to you and so few to me? Said the other, Perhaps they come to me because I am surprised that they come, and they don't come to you because you are surprised that they don't come.

If attraction to the Jewish community is absent, no amount of scholarship and righteousness will take its place. And at times attraction has come from the most unexpected sources. For instance, few Orthodox Jews of two generations ago would have expected that the ideas of the "goy" Herzl would become a center of Jewish feeling.

There is therefore much to be said for seeking the truth of our actual inner situation without attempting to judge in advance whether that truth will be constructive or destructive. To pretend that by an act of the will the crumbling of a tradition can be reversed and a direct equivalent of past relations be brought into being seems a very dubious, not to say dangerous, procedure. The loss of innocence carries with it certain consequences—it becomes necessary to look deeper in order to discover virtue. After all, the reprehensible rootlessness of the intellectuals was not brought about by them but by the present situation in which Jewish identity is rooted. The most extreme acts of "affirmation" do not change that condition so much as reveal it. It is difficult to believe that the young Jewish religious fanatics in Israel who attack Sabbath violators and girls in shorts, and those who demand legislation designed to keep Jewish blood pure and Jewish culture intact, are moved by the ancient holiness. Today, it is not God who inspires such aggressiveness concerning sexual matters. It seems more likely that the 20th-century Sadducees wish to treat as an absolute something which they sense to be quite relative—relative, for example, to a supra-national ecclesiastical solidarity, which, noble though it may be, is something rather different from loving the Torah. They wish the Sabbath and modesty to be for them what they were for their grandfathers, and, recognizing that such is not the case, are determined to make it so by force.

IN TERMS of my theme, those wildly traditional young Jews, too, are *modern* men who, having had to choose, have chosen to be Jews in the old style. Even those who come from older communities of Europe and the Near East are within our contemporary predicament in that their communal springs have been too disrupted by change any longer to feed them a pure unquestioned identity. They could have chosen to be something else than their fathers; in choosing to be Jews they chose to define the Jew in terms of his religious beliefs and practices. Apart from their violence and orthodoxy, their position is similar to that of Jews in America who see in the practice of the Jewish religion—in one form or another—the essential and exclusive content of Jewish existence. In this country the display of identity tends to be subdued. Here the most orthodox Jews hesitate to imitate those interesting strangers one sees on the street who seem to hold that only a costume consisting of caftan, round hat, earlocks, beard, is appropriate to Jews. But whether or not a uniform of Jewishness is adopted, Jewish religion takes on the character of a modern ideology rather than of a traditional faith, when it declares that its main purpose is to serve as the identifying sign of a descendant of Abraham. The style of the choice is less important than the fact that a conscious choice is demanded.

By setting up a measure of who is a proper Jew and who isn't, ideologists of positive Judaism no doubt hope to bind American Jews more closely together. They risk, however, producing an exactly opposite effect. To define is to exclude. Spontaneous fidelity to tradition, or the awakening of collective passion in the manner of the prophets, also excludes persons on the periphery of the community; but the loss in numbers is compensated for by the increased solidarity at the core. When the East European Jew with the *payes* and round hat dismisses us American Jews with his abstraction that a Jew is one who looks and speaks thus and so, we know that our estrangement is the result of his immersion in one historic aspect of the Jewish self and that he and the others will remain together in it until the end. Not so when some of us are wiped off the books as rootless by leaders of American congregations who thunder the word "constructive" in book reviews delivered as sermons. The process of denominating and excluding by an ideology that has the authority neither of a lived tradition nor of the supernatural does not necessarily have any binding influence. One knows how this machinery works in contemporary politics and social life—it creates pseudo-communions which quickly disintegrate unless force is available to rivet them together. The Jew who has chosen to be a Jew and thereupon defines the Jew by the image of him he has created, may he not provoke other Jews, especially the youngest and the newest, to seek, in dislike or despair of being *that,* to choose not to be a Jew at all? The "constructive" moralist may, under certain conditions, drive away more than he marshals together. It would seem to be wider—and more useful, too—to apply the principle of the Hasid: Each man is indispensable; and in the spirit of that humanism to reject the "Jewish" Jew's rejection of the others.

Against the excluding impulse of those who have chosen to make being a Jew the central fact of their lives, I therefore support the value of the perspective of the semi-outsider who has not willed his Jewishness and is only a Jew in whatever respect and to whatever depth he finds that he *is* a Jew. Admittedly, this perspective imposes no conditions upon history. But perhaps precisely in that lies its worth. Instead of willing what the Jew shall be, the outsider may cast light on what the Jew is—including whatever indifference and ignorance of their own past is found among individuals.

And, after all, isn't it true that the Jew is something, even before he has willed to be something? Something that preserves *itself?* Something that in being communicated from man to man builds its own solidarity, without appeals to duty?

The individual who seeks in himself the hidden content of his Jewishness must accept the risk of what he may find. Like all serious adventures in self-discovery, such a search is an affirmation of a faith in value and demands moral courage as well as a certain inner stability; his daring implies a sense of being secure in his worth. This the ideologist of commitment cannot comprehend. To him exposing oneself to the research of one's confusion and negations appears as both immoral and painful. For his own part, he tries to evade the perils of discovery by formulating in advance a content for Jewishness that will by-pass or overcome his fears and doubts and guide him to psychological security. But these external values created without regard to his own inner condition or that of other Jews must be kept constantly inflated by pretended certainty and induced enthusiasm. So that at length his defense of a program in which he does not wholly believe tends to breed in him a concealed Nihilism and a desperate awareness of aimlessness and ultimate defeat.

IN AN article in COMMENTARY some years ago,* I objected to the notion that Judaism was a rational ethical or social ideology and tried to point to a basic element that bound Jews together. Underneath the separation of individual Jews, I thought I discerned the form of a certain emotion—an emotion which was actually present, not one that had to be simulated or brought into being by laudable intentions. This emotion which I seemed to find in the Jewish course arose from the sense of living within a cycle of repetitions that time after time brought Jews to re-enact collectively certain characteristic events of their history, such as the return to the Land of the Fathers.

With some Jews this sense of collective repetition produced a passion for the past that completely dominated their lives; in others, of course, it was extremely faint. But even where it was faint it seemed to me to exist—indeed to be so definite a characteristic that it could even be denied or hidden, or take the form of apparently unrelated desires and hopes, and still be recognized.

Jewish feeling regarding the recurrence of the folk past in the future, assuming that it was present (for could one speak of it except as a speculation?), evidently reached beyond the Jewish religion, of which I took it to be the essence, since it appeared also among Zionists who were not religious at all, who were indeed anti-religious. At the same time, it appeared also in Jews who were not Zionists. As an emotion it was present among Orthodox Jews who had never known Zionism and among mystics who had re-interpreted Orthodoxy.

It was only such a *sentiment,* deeper than religion considered as an ideology, and deeper than political and social ideology, that could explain for me the surprising surge of identification during the recent events in Palestine among Jews who had not chosen their Jewishness and who had been content with their whole or partial anonymity or with a non-Jewish identity and who despised nationalist values.

It has been said that all that recent passion was only a reflex of the terror against the Jews of Europe. Perhaps it *was* something in the nature of a reaction to anti-Semitic violence. But suppose it be granted that the sudden turn toward Palestine did take place in response to the crisis in Europe. Ought it not be asked, why that reaction instead of some other? Just that reaction was the Jewish reaction. In his crisis the Jew showed that Jewishness had a historical content for him by turning toward *his* history instead of toward the history or the ideas of others.

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* "Pledged to the Marvelous," February 1947.

So the Jew may be identified by his history, by the presence of the Jewish past within him. He is a Jew in that his experience contains the possibility of linking itself with the collective and individual experiences of earlier Jews. Through him the dead ancestors can take their place in the present. And this occurs not through his revival of the forms which they created—their doctrines, rituals, institutions—but through his own creative acts which they inspire. A drawing by Picasso brings the ancient world infinitely closer to us than all the reconstructions of the academicians, and a canvas of Chagall unites us once for all with the Jews of Vitebsk, as well as with ourselves as modern men.

The identification of the Jew by his history will, however, also exclude too many unless it be recognized that today the past is a varying and oscillating presence, sometimes occupying a man entirely and becoming his veritable self-consciousness, sometimes diminishing to a vague sentiment or receding from his awareness altogether. For the modern individual his history is not a solid continuous plane upon which he firmly stands but a moving mass full of holes and vacuums which may envelop and carry him forward or veer away and let him fall. The area covered by the Jewish history-mass cannot be delineated by any static concept of Judaism nor represented monopolistically by any "organized group." Does it not also comprise those who at any given moment refuse to take responsibility for themselves as Jews, as well as those who recognize themselves as Jews only under certain circumstances? The Jew whom the Jewish past has ceased to stir, whom every collective anguish or battle for salvation passes by, may tomorrow find himself in the very center of the movement toward the future. Like the reputation of the *zaddik*, a community is often built by surprise. Perhaps it is just those Jews who arrive from nowhere who will come to resemble most closely their remotest and most venerable grandfathers.

TITO'S THREAT TO STALIN'S EMPIRE

The Role America Can Play

PETER MEYER

TO PARAPHRASE the opening sentences of a century-old political pamphlet: *A specter is haunting Communist Europe—the specter of Titoism. All the powers of the Stalinist world have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter: the Czar of the Kremlin and the Dean of Canterbury, Rakosi and Thorez, fellow-traveling French radicals and Eastern German police spies. Where is an oppositional group that has not been decried as Titoist by its opponents in power?*

Really, where is one? Broad and bloody purges are taking place throughout Russian-dominated Eastern Europe. Laszlo Rajk in Hungary, Traicho Kostov in Bulgaria, and Koci Drodze in Albania have been executed; General Markos of the Greek guerillas has vanished without trace; Wladislaw Gomulka in Poland, Vilem Novy in Czechoslovakia, Lucretiu Patrascanu in Rumania, and too many others to mention, have been expelled from their Communist parties and await trial and inevitable conviction. The charge is always the same: the (literally) mortal sin of sympathy with Tito's disobedient behavior. Accusations of bourgeois nationalism, anti-Soviet espionage, sabotage, and subservience to Western imperialism are also thrown in to spice the brew.

In the West, the first reports of the Tito-Cominform split evoked little more than confusion. Some experts were reluctant to believe their eyes or follow their noses, and maintained that the dispute was a staged affair to deceive the West. Louis Adamic, who was disturbed but had apparently not yet made up his mind in which waters to fish, wrote that "the crisis between the Cominform and the Yugoslavs is not political but in human relations." Henry Wallace, with characteristic insight, thought that the Cominform was angry with Tito because he was slow in liquidating feudal land-ownership (which happened to be abolished in Yugoslavia decades ago). Other observers, squinting from the Right, saw merely a tussle between Tweedledum and Tweedledee; some even argued—for example, Bogdan Raditsa in the *Saturday Evening Post*—that Titoism is a potentially greater, because more insidious, danger to democracy than is Stalinism. Common to most of these reactions was the conviction that this was a family squabble of no great importance to the world.

By now, everybody has learned that the split is serious. For the purge is not confined merely to Communist parties sluggish with power. It has worked its way through the Communists in Germany, France, and Italy, and it has split the Communist party of Norway where the minority of the Central Committee expelled its "Titoist" majority, including the Number 1 leader, Peder Furubotn. Recently it reached Japan, where the best known Communist, Sanzo Nosaka, was publicly denounced from Moscow, and was temporarily saved from expulsion, even after a formal recantation, only by his popularity with party members.

Blood-letting, however, seems neither to have killed the patient nor cured him. The "disease" has spread into the ranks of fellow-

In the bitter struggle between Stalin and Tito, the democratic world is no mere spectator, but a participant; we have a stake in properly understanding the inner tensions of world Communism, and, if possible, in rendering them more acute. Peter Meyer here explores the roots of what by now is known as Titoism, disentangles the genuine issues from the web of accusations and recriminations, and suggests in what way the Western democracies can act so as to hope for the greatest benefit for democracy. Mr. Meyer knows Eastern Europe at first hand and has written articles on Soviet Russia for various periodicals.

travelers: the former Member of Parliament, Konni Zilliacus, in England; the writers Jean Cassou, Edith Thomas, and Vercors in France; Louis Adamic, Jo Davidson, William S. Gailmor in America—all are joining the ranks of Tito sympathizers. In the minds of men who, while enchanted by the Communist dream, are weary of apologizing for the Russian Communist reality, there is stirring the vision of a "purified," more humane, and less opportunistic Communist movement.

Titoism, organized and unorganized, is on its way to becoming a momentous internal crisis in the postwar Communist world.

What is its driving force? In what direction is it heading?

Is Tito's heresy a matter of nationalism pure and simple, a base upsurge of pre-Communist fealties? Yes, says Moscow. In the eyes of the Kremlin, the Titoists started on the road to ruin as "bourgeois nationalists," ending up inevitably as a "band of fascists." But the Titoists reject the first label as resolutely as the second. They announce themselves true internationalists who, in the orthodox socialist tradition, defend the principle of equality among all nations, big and small. And if this means, concretely, equality between Russia and Yugoslavia—well, the Yugoslavs are not averse to accepting such a practical application of the principle. In Yugoslav eyes, the Russians are the nationalists. Obviously, nationalism and internationalism do not mean the same thing in Belgrade and Moscow.

Recently, with increasing theoretical abandon, the Yugoslav leaders have begun to speak of their fight against Russian "imperialism." But since they are still loyal to the official Communist doctrine that imperialism is the final stage of capitalist society and nothing else, they fail to explain where imperialism comes from in a Russian society they still acknowledge to be "socialist," if wicked. For the rest of the world, however, unshackled by Communist dogma, the term "imperialism" only describes what everybody can see with naked eye: Russia is an expansionist power, conquering, exploiting, and oppressing foreign peoples for the benefit of its own ruling class.

Actually, no observer at all objective believes that in today's Russia there is either socialism or a "classless society." Nor is Russia approaching these goals. Quite the contrary: the gap between the social classes is greater in Russia than in most capitalist countries and is widening every day. A tight, hierarchically organized bureaucracy is the ruling class. It alone decides on production and distribution, war and peace, on all matters of economics and politics. The rest of the population — workers, kolkhoz peasants, slave laborers — is a mere living appendix to the material means of production.

This Russian society is full of inner contradictions, although they take forms other than those familiar to capitalism. In spite of all planning, immense disproportions appear in economic life. The automatic, if haphazardly functioning, control of economic life by the free market was abolished; rational planning by discussion, criticism, public opinion, was not allowed to develop. The result is disorder, waste, duplication, inflated overhead charges, immense spending for unproductive purposes, parasitism on an unheard-of scale, and a generally low productivity of labor. Instead of capitalism's "reserve army" of the unemployed, Russia has an ever increasing army of slowly dying slave laborers; instead of "overproduction," it has chronic underproduction, lack of consumption goods, lack of raw materials, lack of industrial and agricultural equipment, lack of skilled labor.

These chronic disproportions and recurrent shortages, abetted by a resurgent Russian chauvinism, impel the regime to foreign expansion. Subjugated territories can be a source of cheap raw materials, consumption goods, machinery, skilled workers and technicians, and additional recruits for the army of forced labor. They are also a happy hunting ground for members of the Russian ruling class who can be sent into the occupied areas as instructors, advisers, administrators, officers, agitators. Strategic-military considerations are a motive too, of course. But if these could perhaps explain the occupation of certain territories, they do not explain the ruthless economic exploitation that accompanies this occupation.

Among the various methods of Russian exploitation, the traditional imperialist one of profitable investment plays only a minor role. Some small short-term loans for financing trade with Russia have been granted (to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and recently China). Conditions are rigid and payments enforced. But in general, the Russians do not invest—they take away.

The simplest method is looting. Billions of dollars worth of industrial equipment has been removed from Germany, Hungary, Rumania, Manchuria, and other satellite countries. At the same time, "reparations" in goods are strictly exacted and are valued, for the occasion, at the lower pre-war prices. Heavy fines are imposed for late deliveries. How far this sort of chicanery can go is well illustrated in the case of several small ships delivered by Finland as reparations. The boats were delivered in time to avoid a fine, they were built accurately to complicated specifications, but they were still refused by Russian inspectors because there was no picture of Stalin in the masters' cabins!

Another instrument of exploitation exists in the mixed Russian-satellite companies, which today own the most important industries in Eastern Germany, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. The assets are entirely furnished by the occupied country; fifty per cent—and more—of the profits go to Russia, which dominates the administration. Some details about the working of these companies were revealed in a report published by the Yugoslav Minister of Foreign Trade, Milentije Popovic. In the course of negotiations for the founding of a Russian-Yugoslav company to develop Yugoslav oil resources, the Russians demanded that the Yugoslavs throw in the oil lands for nothing and split the profits with Russia fifty-fifty. When the Yugoslavs suggested that the value of the oil lands be considered in estimating the contributions of both countries, it was dismissed by the Russians as a demand for "capitalist rent." In Bulgarian and Rumanian timber-cutting companies, the Russians make a fifty per cent profit per year on their "investment."

Finally, there are the less publicized, but very efficient, methods of exploiting dependent countries through subtleties of foreign trade. The satellites "negotiate" commercial treaties with Russia. The details of such treaties are never published, but we have some glimpses into their workings. According to the above-mentioned report by Popovic, Yugoslavia had to pay two million dollars for generators which could be obtained in Western Germany for $450,000; $41,850 for suction pumps priced at $13,000 in the West; $377,000 for cranes obtainable elsewhere for $250,000. But it had to sell its copper and bauxite to the Russians at far below the world price. Similarly, according to official Hungarian statistics for 1947, the index of Hungarian export prices to the Soviet Union was 47 per cent lower than the index of export prices to the Marshall Plan countries. In 1946-47, Poland exported to Russia 14.5 million tons of coal for $1 a ton, while the export price to other countries was $10-12 in 1946 and $15-16 in 1947. One nice feature of this commerce is that Russia often sells a part of such imports to other satellite countries at a considerable profit. In 1946 Finland bought commodities of Polish origin for 1,663 million Finnish marks; only 12 million marks' worth were bought directly from Poland, the rest from Russia.

The more industrialized satellite countries, such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, find that enforced subservience to Moscow is crippling their economy. They can rationally develop their industries only by economic collaboration with the West, where they can get machines, capital, some necessary raw materials, and profitable prices for their exports. That is why, in 1947, the Czechoslovak Cabinet decided—unanimously and with the consent of all its Communist members—to accept the Marshall Plan. At that time, a Polish government delegation was in Prague, and the decision was made in agreement with the Poles. But immediately afterwards, Premier Gottwald was called to Moscow, and in twenty-four hours the Czech cabinet decision was reversed by a *coup de téléphone*.

As to the predominantly agrarian satellites, their main economic problem was, and is, chronic agrarian overpopulation. In Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, countries of small peasants, there were no great estates to be divided. In Hungary and Rumania, the distribution of land created dwarf parcels which could not secure a decent living to their owners. The only solution of the economic problems of these countries would be a judicious industrialization—which would absorb a part of the peasantry into the city—combined with the modernization of agriculture. That was recognized, before the war, by all serious students of East Europe.

But Russia considers the satellite countries primarily as sources of cheap raw materials and half-finished products which are badly needed in the Soviet Union, and which are more profitable to import than manufactured goods. Therefore, the claims of Czech and Polish Communists that Marshall Plan aid, accepted under appropriate guarantees for political independence, could strengthen the nationalized economies of their countries, were rejected as treasonable. The Yugoslav industrialization plan was rebuked by Moscow as "adventurous," and Bulgaria was condemned, in the words of one Titoist wit, to remain the "vegetable garden" of the Empire.

THE satellite countries are, then, administered according to Russian plan—but by a native Communist bureaucracy, which came to power under Russian orders and with Russian help, and which works under Russian supervision. This makes for interesting complications, all of which end by putting the native bureaucrats in an anomalous position. On the one hand, they know only too well that they need Russian protection against the resistance of the population, against attempts at restoration of the *ancien régime*, against possible foreign political and economic pressure. On the other, they are in the unenviable position of having to exact tribute for their foreign protectors and to introduce measures that ruin the country's economy. Their role as the agents of foreign domination increases the hatred of the people; their meek attempts to reduce Russian interference make them suspect in Russian eyes.

In addition, the native Communist bureaucrats of each country know that their specific interests are small change in Russia's pocket. Did not Russia sell out Yugoslav claims to Trieste and South Carinthia? Was it not ready to detach the Macedonian regions of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria in order to create an "independent" Macedonian satellite? Will it not some day give Czechoslovak Teschen to Poland? Will it not create an "independent" Soviet Slovakia? Can it not return the Oder-Neisse territories to its puppets in Eastern Germany? Can it not even decide to throw out the native Quislings and replace them with Russian Gauleiters?

It was against the possibility of such threats eventuating that plans were conceived for a kind of East European Federation, which would also be an economic blessing of the first order. But *"Divide et impera"* is the slogan of the Russian, as well as of other, imperialists. Even before the end of the war, Russia prohibited a Czech-Polish federation which had been agreed upon by the Czech and Polish governments-in-exile in London. After the war, Yugoslav and Bulgarian Communists conducted negotiations looking forward to implementing the old socialist and Communist slogan of a Balkan or, at least, South-Slavic federation. Immediately, Dimitrov was publicly rebuked in *Pravda*, and had to disavow the plan. (How sincere his renunciation was, remains a moot question; the Yugoslavs maintain that Dimitrov encouraged their revolt, even after their open split with the Cominform.) At the same time, Traicho Kostov was expelled from the Bulgarian Politburo with an official explanation that he had "misused Dimitrov's name in sowing distrust of Russia," and a few weeks later Dimitrov was sent to Russia where he conveniently died. Now his nearest friend, Kolarov, is also dead; Kostov was executed, and the Bulgarian

Communist party is being thoroughly purged of collaborators of the old leadership.

Under these circumstances, the satellite bureaucracy cannot but be ill at ease. If it does not resist, it surely at least dreams of resistance. There is no doubt that many Communist leaders in the satellite countries want to be more independent. But can they get away with it?

TITO, the first to stage a serious rebellion, *did* get away with it. Because of that he represents an incendiary example to the rest of Eastern Europe, threatening the Russian Empire with fragmentation.

Tito's success has some specifically Yugoslav reasons, bound up with the history of the Yugoslav Communist party. Tito himself has given us an eight-hour-long speech on the subject. That was at the Yugoslav Party Congress in 1948, and Tito had a good pretext. He was supposed to give a report on the activities of the Central Committee since the last party convention. It so happened that the previous convention had taken place just twenty years earlier, in April 1928; Tito gave his version of the whole party history, since its foundation.

In 1921, the Yugoslav Communist party was forced, after a brief legal existence, to go underground. The Central Committee went abroad and the party membership was persecuted and almost completely destroyed. What remained was the conspiratorial apparatus, directed from abroad, and maintaining some precarious contacts with small scattered groups in the country. In 1929, when King Alexander proclaimed his military dictatorship, the Comintern ordered an "armed uprising." The Central Committee in exile obligingly transmitted the order. No uprising materialized, of course, but the remaining Communists in the country were arrested, tortured, and many of them killed in Yugoslav jails. One of those who survived in jail —where he was secure from Russian purges!— is the veteran leader, and today's chief Yugoslav theoretician, Mosha Pijade.

Between 1930 and 1937, the Yugoslav Communist party practically did not exist. Different refugee factions still fought for "leadership" in the emigration, accused each other of "deviations," of treason and spying, denounced each other to Stalin, ran to the Kremlin for arbitration. The Comintern expelled whole groups, created new "rank-and-file" factions to end all factions, imposed new "leaderships," but to no avail.

Finally, in 1937, Moscow decided to dismiss all members of the then existing Central Committee—except one. When Tito, in his speech at the 1948 congress, got to this point, the whole convention gave him a thunderous ovation. Everybody knew that this one was Tito. He was given the power to reregister all remaining members and sympathizers, in or out of jail, in or out of the country. He expelled whom he wished, kept whom he wished, and accepted whom he wanted from among the new recruits. He came to power in the party as an emissary of Moscow but with practically unlimited powers, and under conditions of illegality which made it difficult to keep check on him.

This was the time of the "Popular Front," when the Comintern proclaimed its eagerness for an alliance with "all democratic elements." New recruits were won on this platform: young intellectuals, republicans sympathizing with the Spanish Loyalists, people opposed to the appeasement of Hitler. It was during this period that the Yugoslav Communist party was reborn, and so it is not astonishing that there are no "old Bolsheviks" and even no "old Stalinists" in Yugoslavia. The present leadership is made up of relatively young men, in their thirties or forties. They know the history of the socialist and Communist movements only in its most recent Stalinist version, and the old ideological controversies only from biased hearsay.

In 1941 there were already about twelve thousand party members. Some three thousand of them survived the war. These three thousand are today the ruling class of Yugoslavia. From their ranks are recruited the 122 members of the leading bodies of the party; these 122 hold, among themselves, 833 key positions as federal and state cabinet ministers, leaders of mass organizations, and top regional executives. They are a closely-knit group. They were recruited and educated by Tito and owe him their personal allegiance. They constitute the famous Dedinje elite, named after the suburb of Belgrade where they now live in luxury.

IMPORTANT also is the fact that the Yugoslavs were not freed by the triumphant Red Army, or by any other foreign army, though they were considerably aided by Western supplies. The Yugoslavs are very proud of having "liberated themselves" and are never tired of joking about the "men with pipes" (Gottwald, Dimitrov, Rakosi) who sat in Moscow smoking and waiting until the Red Army brought them back to their countries. By the time the war approached its end, sizable territories were already in the hands of Tito's partisans, and Yugoslavs are fond of remembering that the commander of the Soviet armies, when he got to the borders of Serbia, found it expedient to ask the Partisan government for permission to enter Yugoslav territory.

The partisans were, at that time, no loose bands of *francs-tireurs*. They were rigidly organized in "brigades" and "divisions," and in special elite troops, called "proletarian divisions," composed, if not of proletarians, at least of trusted Communists. There was an elaborate military hierarchy abounding, in Balkan fashion, with colonels and generals. There was a secret police, the famous OZNA, terrorizing all "deviationists." The political arm of the government was the "Popular Front," decoratively trimmed with some liberal intellectuals, but created and dominated, as official speeches always have stressed, by the Communist party.

After the liberation, the military-political hierarchy of the partisans took over the state. The leaders of democratic parties who were taken into the government under the Tito-Subasic agreement were absolutely impotent. They were not allowed to rebuild their party organizations; there was no free press, and no free speech. The police terror was unrestrained. Thousands were abruptly jailed as "enemies of the nation," put into concentration camps without trial, their wealth expropriated. Non-Communist leaders were soon thrown out of government and parliament. A series of political trials was conducted, exactly after Soviet models. The leaders of the democratic peasant and socialist parties (Macek, Topalovic) were forced to live in exile. Those remaining in the country were either jailed or interned in remote places.

Yugoslavia became *the* model satellite. It was a one-party state at a time when other satellite countries still had coalition governments and tolerated some opposition. It was the first to complete the nationalization of its industries; its five-year plan was the most ambitious; its machinery of repression was the most efficient. Satellite statesmen traveled to Belgrade to learn how such things are done; Yugoslav police instructors went to Budapest and Sofia to teach their colleagues the latest Communist methods of dealing with the opposition. Yet the most perfect satellite was the first to rebel.

THE question is being asked more and more frequently: was there a world-wide "Titoist" conspiracy of long standing within the Communist movement? The MVD, of course, says yes: Rajk, Kostov, and Drodze were simply agents, planted and supported by Tito, just as Tito was an agent of the British and American intelligence. Nobody in his senses believes the second part of this accusation. But there are serious observers—for instance, Ruth Fischer in her recent article in *Life* magazine—who are ready to give some credence to the first part of it.

According to this theory, which has to fill out the gaps in information by more or less probable speculations, the Communist leaders of the wartime resistance movements in the different European countries were wary of Moscow and tried to keep their movements independent of the Kremlin's emissaries.

A long time ago, Dimitrov had chosen Tito as the Yugoslav leader; the negotiations for a South Slavic federation were conducted by the Bulgarian master and his Yugoslav disciple from the very beginning in opposition to Moscow and with the perspective of creating a more or less autonomous bloc of Communist states from the Baltic to the Aegean. Moves and counter-moves in the subterranean struggle were made on both sides according to plan, and in full consciousness of the issues involved.

The evidence, however, does not seem to bear out this interpretation. Instead of a planned, coordinated progress towards a preconceived aim, we see on the side of the "Titoists" hesitation and vacillation. Before the open break in Yugoslavia, the similarity of oppositionist tendencies in different Communist parties was largely the result of the similar positions in which the satellite bureaucrats found themselves in regard to Russian imperialism and the needs of their own countries. Since June 1948, to be sure, those opposition groups which are aware of the necessity of a full break (and which probably form only a minor part of the "deviationist" bureaucracy), may have been seeking organizational contacts with Belgrade. But, even so, any vision of a "purified," international, anti-Stalinist Communism, led by Tito, is probably a mirage. Tito, like Stalin, is a totalitarian, and a national despot is ill-suited to be the leader of international revolution. One has only to think of Napoleon and Lenin—and Stalin.

The satellite bureaucracy originally came to power with many illusions about its future role in the framework of the Russian bloc; it was again and again surprised by every new step towards centralization and *Gleichschaltung* dictated from Moscow. It always accepted Moscow decisions, even if it executed them with a marked lack of enthusiasm. Whenever it ventured an independent step (Czech acceptance of the Marshall Plan, negotiations for the South Slavic federation), it was done in the expectation that Moscow would condone it; whenever consent was denied, the step was retraced immediately. Even the Yugoslavs, as we shall see, were driven to each step of resistance and into the final break by a series of ultimatums which gave them no choice other than resistance or suicidal, unconditional surrender.

THE Yugoslav revolt was so much of a top-echelon affair that the Yugoslav people had no inkling of it up to the very moment when it was announced from Moscow.

The real reason for the Tito-Cominform split cannot be easily found in the famous Cominform resolution of June 1948. At first glance, this resolution is one of the most confused documents of our confused era. It reproaches Tito for collectivizing too fast; it reproaches him for collectivizing too slowly. It accuses him of "rightist" hesitancies and "ultra-left" adventures. It says that he neglected the leading role of the Communist party and that he introduced a dictatorship of the party leadership. It even castigates him for lack of democracy and excess of terror. It almost looks as if a bright—or rather not so bright—young man in the Cominform had been given an alphabetic manual of deviations and had copied diligently every item from A (adventurism) through B (Bernsteinism and Bucharinism) to Z (Zinovievism).

But there are serious points. The Yugoslav party leaders, the resolution says, had a "hostile attitude" toward the Soviet Union. They spoke, among themselves, about "Russian imperialism." They watched the Russian instructors through their own secret police.

The inside story was revealed when Belgrade published the correspondence between the Yugoslav and Russian Communist parties. It is not, to be sure, the whole story, but it offered enough clues for the puzzle to fall into place.

The earliest incidents mentioned go back to 1944-45. During the Soviet occupation of Serbia, some Russian officers committed what are described as "offenses of a moral character." In a confidential meeting, Milovan Djilas, a member of the Yugoslav Politburo, said that Russian officers seemed to be on a lower moral level than "even" the British officers. That was reported to Moscow. Stalin sent Tito a telegram saying: "It is inadmissible to slander, in such a way, the army which helped you to expel the Germans." Djilas had to go to Moscow and explain the incident. According to the Russians, he apologized abjectly and asked to be forgiven; in the Yugoslav version, he explained that what he meant was that someone might be led to say that Russian officers did not behave quite correctly.

Another incident is still more interesting. Tito spoke in Ljubljana about Trieste and said: "We do not want to pay [other nations'] foreign obligations, we do not want to be pawns in the dealing between various spheres of interest." Moscow considered this a veiled attack on its policies and the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade received the following instructions: "The speech of Comrade Tito is a hostile attack against the Soviet Union. Tell Comrade Tito, if he makes one more such attack, that we will be forced to criticize and to disavow him publicly."

On June 5, 1945, Foreign Minister Kardelj received the Soviet Ambassador and told him that he, Kardelj, considered Moscow's criticism fully justified and understood perfectly that Moscow could not tolerate such things. He added that Tito, although he had great merits, was over-confident; he complained that there was no collective leadership, implying that Tito alone decided everything. "We would wish," he said, "that the Soviet Union consider us not as representatives of a foreign country but rather as representatives of one of the future Soviet Republics, and our party as part and parcel of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." To this the Russian Ambassador replied with magnificent punctilio that Yugoslavia was, after all, an independent country, and its Communist party an independent party. The Russians, he added, would be glad to give their advice but such advice must be sought before and not after the event.

It is difficult to decide whether Kardelj was ready to sell out his master or whether he just wanted to fool Moscow at that time. But the incident illustrates how hard the Yugoslavs tried to avoid an open break.

From that time on, a silent but ruthless struggle began between the secret police of both countries. The OZNA watched every step of Soviet emissaries. The NKVD recruited agents to watch over all activities of the Yugoslav leaders. Later on, in a letter to Stalin, Tito complained that a Yugoslav Army commander gets only nine to eleven thousand dinars a month, a member of the Yugoslav federal Cabinet only twelve thousand, but a colonel-lieutenant in the Russian military mission thirty to forty thousand dinars. Yugoslavia could not pay, he told Stalin, the immense salaries of such "advisers." The Soviet government replied that it could not reduce the salaries of the instructors. The Yugoslavs countered with a proposal to reduce their number. Russia answered by recalling its military mission. That was in March 1948, and with this incident the break was practically consummated. It only remained to prepare the other satellite leaders, to invite the rebellious Yugoslav leaders to Bucharest, and, when they refused, to write the excommunicating resolution.

In the annals of the Communist movement, one can find no opposition faction which has produced so little ideological expression as the Titoists. The Titoists now speak frequently about how every country should find its own way to socialism. But they always fail to state concretely how their way differs from the Russian. Even after two years of open hostility, the issue remains the degree of relative autonomy, and the comparative financial and social status, of the two Communist bureaucracies. The Yugoslav revolt developed from that of agents who wanted to become junior partners to that of agents who now want to open their own shop. It is still the same kind of shop.

Yugoslavia is today as totalitarian as it was in 1948. The "voluntary" work brigades have been abolished, it is true, but forced labor in factories was introduced at the same time. The "election reform" of January 1950 is pure window-dressing: it permits putting up independent candidates if they can gather one hundred endorsements in their district, but oppositional parties, press, and agitation are still forbidden. The deputy who reported the bill to parliament was careful to stress that the Yugoslav government cannot be changed by elections because it was installed by a revolution, and that cabinet changes similar to those in Western countries are out of the question. Tito himself reiterated, in February 1950: "Two programs cannot exist in our country. . . . Revolution is a brutal thing." It is: the terror in Yugoslavia has not changed except that "Moscow trials" are now also conducted against people accused of being agents of Moscow.

But, even without benefit of ideology, in the last two years the rift between Belgrade and Moscow has widened immensely and Russian propaganda has reached the point of describing Yugoslavia as a fascist state. Sharp notes have been followed by the denunciation of treaties, a virtual suspension of diplomatic relations, an economic blockade against Yugoslavia, organized border incidents, and a deployment of Russian troops on the Yugoslav borders. The "cold war" between Russia and Yugoslavia can become violent at any moment.

From the Russian point of view, the situation is simple: centrifugal tendencies in the Russian Empire must be crushed. That means, in the first place, extensive purges everywhere in the Russian orbit. Moreover, wherever possible, native bureaucrats, inherently suspect, must be replaced either by "native" Communists who have spent their whole adult life in Russia or, still better, by Russian bureaucrats and generals such as Rokossovsky, the new dictator of Poland. Finally, the source of infection, the living proof that a revolt against Moscow is not only desirable but also possible, Tito's Yugoslavia, must be liquidated. But this, it turns out, is no easy matter.

Recent experience has shown that Tito cannot be overthrown merely by economic pressure. Nor has Moscow's propaganda had any appreciable effect on the Yugoslav Communist party; defections are negligible, there are no uprisings, and, indeed, there is no internal resistance to speak of except some isolated cases of sabotage. The prospects of organizing anti-Tito guerillas are rather dim; the ex-partisan Tito and his totalitarian apparatus know well how to handle them. Neither can a direct attack by satellite armies help. The Yugoslav Army is stronger, and it is a good bet that the satellite troops would disintegrate after the first battle, if not before. So there is only one sure way to get rid of Tito: direct Russian armed intervention.

This intervention would have occurred a long time ago, if the Russians could be certain that it would not precipitate a world war. It *may* yet occur, if they are left in doubt about it. It *will not occur,* if the Western powers make it unmistakably clear that they will consider a military attack on Yugoslavia a *casus belli.* What Moscow wants, is clear. What it does, depends on Washington.

After all, one obvious thing should not be forgotten. Although Titoist tendencies are produced and constantly reproduced by the inner contradictions of the Russian Empire, it would be impossible for them to become open revolts without the existence of an outside force opposing this empire. The Yugoslavs could not even have thought of resistance if America had been in retreat, if the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact had not consolidated the forces opposing Communism, if the nearest American troops had been, instead of in Germany, Austria, and Trieste, somewhere in the Western hemisphere. Without American resistance to Stalin's rule in Europe, there could have been no Tito. Without continued American resistance, there will be no Tito.

From Tito's point of view, only one thing is absolutely clear: reconciliation with Moscow is impossible. If they did not know it before, the Yugoslav leaders learned from the fate of Rajk and Kostov what they can expect if they fall into Russian hands: arrest, confession, ignominious death. If Stalin conquers Yugoslavia, the whole native bureaucracy will be exterminated, and the bulk of the nation might even be "resettled" in Siberia—as an example to other satellites. The Titoist leaders know that they cannot go back to Moscow.

But where can they go? Their original aim, to become junior partners in the Russian Empire, has proved utopian: there can be no

Communist commonwealth of nations because Russia will not have it. So Yugoslavia is in a paradoxical situation: it can perhaps remain an independent Communist state in the anti-Communist alliance; it cannot remain an independent Communist state in the Communist bloc. It is condemned to continual acrobatics between East and West, between democratic slogans in foreign affairs and anti-democratic terrorism in internal politics. Tito will continue to try to seduce the other satellite states into joining his bolt from the Russian prison, but at present they have neither the strength, the courage, nor the desperation. The masters of Belgrade have perfected tight-rope walking to a high degree. But can it go on forever? And where does the rope end?

That depends, among other things, on the policies of the Western world. There are three courses possible.

The first is the policy of non-intervention, letting Stalin and Tito fight it out. Practically, it would mean a Russian military attack on Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia's final defeat and annihilation, the consolidation of Russian rule in Eastern and Central Europe. That is a policy of disaster.

The second possibility is limited, but unconditional, support of Yugoslavia, without any interference in the Titoist dictatorship. This seems to be the present policy of the State Department. It is substantially the same course many conservative groups propose to follow in respect to Franco: anyone who is ready to fight Russia should be accepted as an ally.

There is a third possible policy, that of unlimited, but *conditional,* support. It would be made absolutely clear to Russia that an armed attack on Yugoslavia will not be tolerated. But the extent of direct help — economic, political, and military — to Tito would be made dependent on the introduction of certain reforms in Yugoslavia. The West cannot reasonably demand the re-introduction of free enterprise in Yugoslavia: if England can stay in the Western bloc with nationalized industries, so can Yugoslavia, if its people choose. But an amnesty to political prisoners, the admission of democratic parties to reasonably free elections, some guarantees for freedom of speech and press —America can indicate that all these would facilitate the granting of loans, the export of machines, technical assistance, and the delivery of arms. Such a policy, in proper doses, can induce the Titoist government to make some democratic concessions. Tito's need is great, and we have much to offer.

It might be said that such a policy would drive Tito back to the Cominform camp. But this is nonsense: the Titoists simply cannot go back, under penalty of death. Or it might be objected that such democratic concessions would weaken Yugoslavia's fight against Moscow. But this is improbable. Of course, the Cominform propagandists will shout about betrayal, but they do it anyway; their arsenal of vituperation is already exhausted. If they add that Yugoslavia is "fascist" because it makes concessions to "bourgeois" political freedoms—which all the peoples of Eastern Europe want—it certainly would not make the name-calling more effective.

No doubt the Titoist bureaucracy would oppose such reforms. It cannot accept them sincerely. It will make reforms only under pressure, reluctantly, and in the hope of being able to sabotage their enforcement. But it will reason—it will *have* to reason—this way: It is better to accept small reforms than to be overthrown; some political freedoms cannot do us much harm, so long as we hold the top levels of state power; the Communist party can still win even in relatively free elections; if we survive the storm, we can go back again. In other words the Titoists will have to prefer some calculated risks to a certain defeat.

How successful their calculation will prove, depends on the growth of democratic forces in Yugoslavia and elsewhere. The fight against Russian imperialism can only achieve success by invigorating the democratic forces in opposition to it. And the Western world is certainly more interested in the victory of democracy than in the preservation of the rule of the Dedinje elite.

WE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS

The Broadway Audience at the Play

ALFRED KAZIN

> *To have great poets, you must have great audiences, too.*
>
> —Whitman

IF YOU love the theater; if you have at least once in the darkness of a theater known what it is to have your mind changed and your senses aroused by that dialogue between man and man on the stage which can be reproduced and enlarged in the inimitable immediate bond between actor and audience, then between members of the audience—the chief impression that a round of Broadway playgoing leaves on you is the overwhelming, secret, embarrassed apathy of the audience itself. Despite the great crowds jostling each other to get into the latest hits, the social éclat that now belongs to anyone who has managed to see *South Pacific* or *Kiss Me Kate,* despite the pure delight of anticipation that will seize any audience as the lights are lowered and the curtain begins slowly to rise, the atmosphere at a Broadway play these days is so inherently dull, distracted, so unrelieved by anything the audience actually expects of the play itself, that if you care for the theater you do not know whether to be outraged more at the theater owners, producers, playwrights, and critics for joining in such a cheat, or at the audience for being such sheep.

THE Broadway audience today does not even know what it is missing. It hopes it will be entertained, it expects at least to be surprised. But if neither entertained nor surprised, it does not know whom or what to complain of; or if it is right to complain at all. For having, on the whole, waited so long and paid so much to sit in a plushly uncomfortable New York theater for the pleasure of watching a "production" whose chief distinction, in the fantastic economic setup of Broadway, is that a great many harried and ingenious people have gone to such limitless expense and trouble actually to get the thing on the boards, the audience is at once too proud of itself for being there at all and too submissive to some living person's eloquence or fabulous sexual appeal, to complain. It is almost enough for itself that it is there (any experience of the living theater in America today being still rare and "old-fashioned" enough to provide an added social consideration); that it has got in; that it has won some small advantage it can prove in conversation.

Surely not the conversation at intermission time in the lounges, or after the play, or in some last poignant effort to recall to the stage a person or a scene that has just given us so much pleasure, which we identify with all deeply felt experiences in the theater. Nothing, to my mind, so characterizes an evening today in most Broadway theaters as the self-consciousness one sees and hears between the acts; the bewilderment, restless boredom, the nervous satiety of people who have been patient and uncomfortable for a reason they cannot quite justify; the rush, as soon as the

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THAT the American theater is today in the doldrums few will deny. In their effort to diagnose the sickness of Broadway, critics have turned their stethoscopes on playwrights, producers, and authors. Here ALFRED KAZIN focuses on the much neglected audience, and turns up some very suggestive clues. Mr. Kazin has written for the *New Yorker, New Republic, Partisan Review,* and other periodicals. He is the author of *On Native Grounds* (1942), a study of American literature, and the editor of Viking's *Portable Blake* (1946). His most recent contribution to COMMENTARY was "The Woman Downstairs" in the February 1950 issue. Mr. Kazin was born in Brooklyn in 1915 and studied at the City College of New York and Columbia University.

curtain is down for the last time, still "to make an evening of it"--and with good reason, since the experience that the tired disenchanted day-time self expected of the theater in the evening has not yet begun.

What *is* the experience of the Broadway audience today at the play? What is it that happens, or rather doesn't happen, to that great crowd of tired, hopeful middle-class people in the dark that explains the irritability and over-conscious discomfort that are felt in New York theaters like an emanation of stale warm air?

TO BEGIN with, the audience remains entirely parallel to the life on the stage, the stage to the audience. It is as if they were two vaguely estranged and even possibly hostile entities that must under no circumstances get any nearer each other than they have to. I am not sorrowing over the lack of "audience participation"—that old, cheap, and indeed sinister trick which developed in the agit-prop theater workshops of the Weimar Republic so many totalitarian techniques for the swaying of Hitler's audiences. It is enough, here, to point to the incredibly bad, neurotic, too often simply inaudible, diction of so many young actors and actresses today.

This would seem to come not so much from bad training, since most of them get no training at all, or only the most shallowly "professional" one; but from the fact that they do not know on what level to pitch their voices, *whom it is they are addressing from the stage.* They obviously have no picture in their minds of the audience except as a great shapeless mass, and certainly not of the inherent differences within it.

It cannot be said that most American actors now play up to the gallery; they seem hardly to know that a gallery exists. With what relief does the audience at such a trivial piece as *The Velvet Glove,* or at such claptrap as S. N. Behrman's *I Know My Love,* comfortably settle into its seats, knowing that from such dependable old hands as Grace George, Walter Hampden, and the Lunts it will at least hear every word spoken with relish, with grace, and with the old-fashioned actor's enjoyment in his own presence. This heightened self-enjoyment, something announced to an audience by the very way an actor walks onto a stage and occupies it, can actually be sent back to him by the audience's delight, and then usually communicates itself to the supporting players. It can now be seen only in the last of the old circus and music-hall stars, like Bobby Clark, just as half the fun of watching the Marx Brothers in the movies lies in their direct unashamed eagerness, learned from how many hilarious evenings in vaudeville, to force themselves on the attention of every last man, woman, and child in the audience. But to do that, you have to believe that the audience is in the theater to get an experience it expects nowhere else. Most performers on Broadway today give one the impression that they are as little interested in the theater as an institution as is the audience itself.

The quality of speech on the stage is, of course, the surest indication of what relations actually exist between the performers and the audience. Whether or not the fine edge and always slightly patronizing clarity of British "educated" speech would seem to have been developed, as I think it was, from long centuries of practice in giving orders to servants and the lower orders generally, the British actors in T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* have the peculiar effect on the audience of surprising it that people so "affected" in their speech can be interested in religion or ideas generally. Hence the incoherent resentment one sees and hears in the audience against the play, from a fear of being taken in; which is quite apart from all serious criticism of it. But the peculiar inaudibility of so many new American performers would seem to come not only from the lack of continuous theater practice which most European actors have, or from the lack of a common standard of American speech; but even more, from their obvious unrelation to the audience. And this begins, I believe, in the fact that the audience does not make enough claims on the actor, that its polite bewilderment, its passivity, keeps him tense and unprepared, but without the final tension (something that escapes even seasoned European actors on Broadway) that is always so marvelous on the stage when everything in your sight and hearing is on the same dramatic pitch.

Properly, the audience is either the third element present to the actor's mind in every dialogue, or it is a great crowd of strangers looking on—it does not matter how friendly, enthusiastic, or indifferent; they will still be strangers. But to overcome that strangeness, the audience must be at home with itself in the theater, something I have not felt in a New York theater for years. The members of the audience must have some bond with each other greater than the social chic and sexual provocativeness of the new Empire fashions. And there must be some outspoken enjoyment of a beautiful line, if and when it comes, for its own sake alone. Though here, however, the audience is perhaps not entirely to blame, since it is usually straining so hard to hear what is being said at all.

Perhaps the deepest reason for the inaudibility of the performers in such new "serious" American items as *The Member of the Wedding* or *Come Back, Little Sheba,* is the fact that the characters are solitary people who do not expect to be overheard by anyone. In the last few years the American drama, like the American novel of the 40's, has turned sharply against the very language of social protest. The only vague, wistful vapors left of it are now in the movies (*Pinky* and *Lost Boundaries* have shown that it is possible to make successful films about Negroes, so long as they are mostly white and look entirely so), and in those large, abundantly relaxed "musical plays," like *South Pacific* and *Lost in the Stars,* which redeem the social guilt the American middle class discovered during the war about its racism. But through the unexpected success of Tennessee Williams, young American playwrights have discovered, just as young novelists have discovered in Truman Capote, that their authentic subject is American loneliness—which is dramatized in the neurotic, the child, the Negro, both man and wife in *Come Back, Little Sheba,* and in every last character in *The Member of the Wedding.*

The extraordinary number of children now on the New York stage is itself an indication that Broadway has at last fallen back on the introspectiveness that has dominated highbrow American fiction in the last decade. And of course children on the stage do not speak too clearly, to a whole audience, in the old-fashioned actor's way, without appearing unnatural, unbearably cute, or even intentionally monstrous. The latter is precisely the point intended in *The Innocents,* that bad movie they have made of Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw,* for the ironic title underscores the remarkable wickedness and homosexual insolence of the young Miles, as played by David Cole.

This characterization, as it is written into the play and as it is performed, bears no resemblance whatever to the extraordinary, shy, and pitifully confused young boy in James's story. But obviously it is meant to be a parody of some British homosexual avant-garde poet, and to sting the audience into having a satisfying moral reflex of dislike. But where the child's speech is largely indistinct, for the excellent reason that he is truly a child (like the little boy in Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding*), one realizes that the pressure on the stage of our familiar American loneliness has made impossible the old, ideally dramatic relations between actor and audience. For here the dialogue on the stage itself is not so much heard between the actors as it is overheard. The child speaks to the Negro, the adolescent heroine to the child, the Negro to the poor, the father to his daughter, as if each were always alone, and had no confidence that he can understand the other or be understood. So that something blurred, always touching, yet inherently elusive—human solitude as a fact in itself alone—is shown on the stage before which the audience feels like an amazed onlooker. It may catch memories or echoes of each human being's private ordeal, but nothing that is in any dramatic sense its own. It responds by pity, not by recognition. There is no *situation* to enter into. The life of the theater is action, reciprocality. Here there is no action—there is only character, and in the characters themselves nothing but their passive suffering—that element which Matthew Arnold said was not a subject for poetry, and is even less so for the stage.

Hence the grateful emphasis that the audience puts, amid all these human silences and obscurities, on the individual performer rather than on the character played; on the performer divorced from the play—which is the most familiar response of the audience in a Broadway theater. For if there is no action and not even the hope of action; if the performer, in what is finally his own solitude on the stage (in a play that does not *move*), must try by any means to elicit some response from the audience, then ironically the inherent sensitivity of such a play as *The Member of the Wedding,* far from transmitting to the audience an experience of human despair, will simply become the occasion for an actor's personal triumph. The tremendous effect that Ethel Waters has on the audience at *The Member of the Wedding*—and very justly, for she is the one fully rounded human being on the stage—is nevertheless due to the freedom she enjoys *from* the play. And we respond so gratefully to her own abundant humanity precisely because we, too, have not been taken up by the play, have not been absorbed. So that in some unexpected release from our unadmitted perplexity or boredom, we fix on her. Alas, on her only as *the* Negro, the great Negro mother, as if even the performer whom we love for herself alone, especially when we cannot love the play, were, still, only the embodiment of a race or class or type.

IT IS perhaps in some such terms that we may understand the Broadway audience's wistful, over-susceptible, yet coldly self-conscious submission to the performer rather than the play—perhaps even *against* the play. I am not speaking here of what happens at such obvious "vehicles" as *Detective Story,* which is an offensive piece of trash held together by loud screams and yells from Ralph Bellamy; or *I Know My Love,* which would be inexcusable if the Lunts were not there to play that happy married couple, the Lunts. But rather, of what happens to the audience at *South Pacific* looking on at the now celebrated love affair between Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza. This is a love affair which seems to take place between races or generations rather than between individuals, and it is conducted in so tumultuous an atmosphere of American largesse, know-how, sex appeal, and achingly liberal good-will toward all those darker and older races which are not so rich, happy, and beautifully careless as ourselves, that I have not in years heard from the stage so ringing an indication of what Americans think of themselves in relation to the world they have just learned is more than half theirs.

The audience at *South Pacific* never forgets that it is present at a fabulous occasion. Everyone in the theater feels this. It is the only really joyous, or at least deeply excited, audience I saw this season. Fabulous because of the planetary American success of the play, which everyone wants to see, which wins all the prizes, which is an obviously complicated American industrial product of the highest ingenuity, but is also extremely liberal—not cheap, but benevolent toward everything and everyone in the creation. Fabulous because we are there, and so feel ourselves, along with the charming people on the stage, fortune's darlings from the first. Fabulous because there arises from the sex-starved Navy men in the Pacific, like the blast from a steel mill, such a riproaring, hungry, idolatrously adoring hymn to the American woman that if we ever had any doubts about American power in the world, we lose them at *South Pacific.* If we ever had doubts about what we were fighting for, we lose them here, and can instantly answer Pinza's weary "European" question —I know what you Americans are fighting against, but what are you fighting for?

We were fighting for love. We were fighting for Mary Martin. In sight of that enchanting girl, so sophisticated, yet so natural; so independent and obdurate in her search for the real thing, yet so kindly and dignified a comrade to every American mother's son three thousand miles from home—she who is every GI's ideal girl friend, but reserved in her American naturalness and good sense for the older, graver, deeper European soul of Ezio Pinza—we rejoice in ourselves, in the immediate human advantages our power can give us, and see in that love affair on the stage the meeting of the continents, of the races, of the traditions. For if Mary Martin represents American goodness and naturalness, Pinza embodies that maturity we Americans know we still need to complete us, to round out the shock of our power with a song straight from the heart, a hymn to the human affections.

Curiously, this was the great theme in Henry James—the meeting between America and Europe, between the power of innocence and the depth of wisdom. And it is more true at *South Pacific* than at *The Innocents,* or at *The Heiress* some seasons back, that Broadway no longer lags culturally behind the world of Henry James; that it, too, has taken our American perplexity, and virtuousness, and inner liberalism, out into the world. But Henry James was too pessimistic, perhaps too morbidly conscious of what the world did to Americans, rather than of what Americans could do for the world. Whereas when Nurse Mary Martin, our fabulous American miss, truly fortune's darling, "the heiress of all the ages," skips round and round in her delight, singing "I'm in love, I'm in love, I'm in love," the audience knows that with no other people could war be such an occasion for the discovery of human sweetness, of love, of the most radiant happiness. And is itself in a perfect frenzy of delight, and, for once, can go home fulfilled.

LONG AGO AT THE WELL

RALPH GORDON

The silent sweetness of the morning sleeps
About the well; mossed stone and water slipping,
And dark earth coolness where long moisture seeps,

Keep April odors, and the slimed wood dripping
Smells of the rain before leaves come to see
Summer's budding, and the slant dewdrop flipping

Leaves downward, falls like a star; and quietly she
Comes to the well's edge in the morning, bringing
Her bowl of fish to cleanse, and lays before me

Their silver, scaling the green, to adimre, and singing
Softly, performs her task; but the trance of the sound
Of the water falling, and the lilt of the wet leaves clinging

Seals me to silence—and the pure spacious round
Of the sky closing over the leafy ground.

Ralph Gordon's latest poem in Commentary was "Bread Gathering" in the April 1950 issue. Mr. Gordon teaches English at the City College of New York.

SOUTH AFRICA: LIFE ON A VOLCANO

The Jewish Community in a Caste Society

BERNARD SACHS

TWO developments have in recent years drawn attention to the Jews of South Africa, who had previously lived, worked, prospered, and encountered problems in a twilight zone outside the ken of most other Jews. Working in fund drives for the emergency relief needs of the surviving Jews in Europe and of Palestine, Jews in other lands discovered that South Africa had many Jews, who per capita raised far more money for Jewish purposes than any other Jewish community in the world. The second development was the surprising victory of the South African Nationalist party about two years ago, which caused Jews all over the world to catch their breaths, and nervously watch to see whether the racist talk and ideology of the Nationalists would be followed by anti-Jewish action.

Observers have started breathing freely again, perhaps too soon; but South African Jewry still deserves to be better known, both for its own sake—it numbers 120,000 persons out of a total white population of two million—and because it exhibits in an exaggerated form the problems that afflict the American Jewish community, and indeed, all those overseas Jewish settlements formed by transplanted Eastern European Jews.

LIKE America, South Africa is a land of vast distances. The distance between Capetown (18,000 Jews) and Johannesburg (47,000 Jews) is one thousand miles. Like America again, it has a relatively sparse population. But it also has an unresolved color problem, created by the existence of eight million Negroes, that places it in the pre-Lincoln period, socially; and superimposed on this is a conflict between the Dutch-descended Afrikaner and the Briton that splits the white population in half and has wastefully consumed a tremendous amount of national energy.

South African Jews are spread over a vast area of 795,000 square miles, and their sparsity is further accentuated by the fact that they are scattered in very small groups. Their central problem—like South Africa's itself—is that of an immigrant community that has as yet had little time to sink its roots deeply, and that has developed little stability, permanence, or content. American Jewry, eighty years ago, faced a similar problem of transplanting a culture to comparatively virgin soil, and was able to make strides commensurate with the tremendous social energy released at the end of the Civil War. A great and highly concentrated industrial civilization arose, in which American Jewry was able to find an important place and successfully resist the strongly running currents of assimilationism. The Jews in the United States today are a unit possessing distinctive attributes but at the same time blending with the national pattern and enriching it.

The energies released by South Africa's development were of a different sort, and the Jews could not gain as much from it, or the general cultural atmosphere created by it. In South Africa the precarious economic base of gold and diamonds (the "Reforma-

THE racist slogans of the Nationalist government of the Union of South Africa, slogans which helped bring it into power, trouble democratic-minded people everywhere and still ring ominously in the ears of South Africa's Jews, who form a precarious minority in a country that since its birth has been torn by race conflict. BERNARD SACHS, who here reports on the present situation of the Jewish community of South Africa, is a well-known writer, editor of the literary and political magazine *Trek*. Mr. Sachs was born in Lithuania in 1905 and went with his parents to South Africa in 1913. His autobiographical volume *Multitude of Dreams* was published in Johannesburg last year.

tion" and "Renaissance" of national evolution) and the spirit of the fortune-hunter which it generated have given rise to a culture that is frail. Its roots are in the diamond diggings sprawling over thousands of square miles in desert lands more arid than Arizona, and in gold mining camps redolent of the Wild West. People who came from every part of the world settled around these gold and diamond mines. Their settlements did not constitute towns or cities, and altogether lacked the cultural attributes of urban life. There was a spirit of impermanence among both Jews and non-Jews who came there to fill their pockets and then return home.

A very large proportion of the Jews who first came to South Africa with the discovery of gold in 1886 remained almost entirely isolated spiritually for a whole generation. With no capital, they made a living by peddling goods to the farmhouses which studded the primitive landscape very irregularly. As a community, this class of "smouses" (peddlers) could well be regarded as on the level of nomads. With the passing years and the accumulated profits, they could erect country stores in the villages and stabilize themselves economically, but spiritually they remained almost as isolated as before.

THE first attempts at a coherent communal life in the cities that were rapidly springing up with the discovery of gold and diamonds had much of the ghetto stamp about them: the East Side with a few South African overtones.

Take Commissioner Street, one of the leading arteries through a typical Jewish suburb in Johannesburg. What is it that gave Commissioner Street its special character before the turn of the century? It was the cafés and penny drinkshops and kosher restaurants, through which there moved by day and by night a colorful pageant made up of the denizens of the underworld and "*alte* Afrikaners." Day and night, in summer and winter, these "*alte* Afrikaners" would while away their hours playing casino, klabyash, and dominoes. Meanwhile, their wives were probably toiling away in some Lithuanian village, waiting to rejoin their men—for South Africa was a "*finstere medina*" that swallowed up many a man who vowed eternal love as he set off to smuggle himself across the border on his way to a golden land.

In 1913, when my own family started out for South Africa from the Lithuanian village of Kamaai, we took greetings from Rikla to her husband who had left Kamaai for South Africa in 1905. Rikla was not reunited with her husband until 1930, just before the South African government closed the doors with an immigration quota.

These cafés were not without their special color. Often, there would appear at their entrance a Communist Jew whose clothes were as ill-fitting as his Anglicized name, Joseph Gray. Assuming a Napoleonic stance, he would declaim in ringing tones that echoed down the labyrinthine backyards, "*Sklaffen,* why don't you fight for your freedom?" The "*alte* Afrikaners" would indolently raise their heads from their dominoes, and as indolently lower them.

The favorite rendezvous of some "*alte* Afrikaners" for their transactions in stolen property was a place called "Shammes Yard." It used to be said that on Saturdays the Jews of "Shammes Yard" observed the Sabbath, and that on weekdays the detectives used to observe the Jews of "Shammes Yard." Of course, the spirit of lawlessness was by no means confined to such Jews. As someone once put it—discussing the early days when Johannesburg was a roaring, wide-open mining camp—the whimsicalities of the Roman-Dutch law, which was the basis of South African legislation, were such that some ways of making money were regarded merely as being less legitimate than others.

This, then, is the gateway through which much of South African Jewry passed.

THE end of the Boer War brought with it an influx of British capital and British cultural influences. Along the Rand, where the gold was mined, large towns began to grow up. With the rise of gold-mining industries, Jews prospered as merchants and middlemen, and could now take advantage of cultural amenities. The moneyed ones sent their sons to the universities, where they qualified as doctors and lawyers, and Jews soon gained a dominating position in both the medical and legal professions. Jewish names began to appear on the slim roster of South African culture.

In 1924, the Nationalist party under General Hertzog defeated the British-oriented General Smuts, a political change that hastened important economic developments. Whereas before 1924 South Africa was mainly dependent on Britain for its industrial products, the Nationalist party did all it could to encourage the growth of an indigenous South African industry, and here Jews played a leading part. As in America, they came to dominate clothing manufacture and also the cinema world, in which the late Isidore Schlesinger (who retained his American citizenship all his life) was a pioneer and the most powerful influence.

But individual Jews also played a very prominent part in the more characteristic South African industries. The Barnatos, Joels, Albus, and Samuel Marks are all stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of gold. Apart from Samuel Marks, they were mostly assimilated Jews, and their offspring are even further removed from Judaism, or have even been converted. Today only one Jew is prominent in the Chamber of Mines, the supreme controlling body of the mining industry—Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, who has openly renounced his Jewish affiliations. Until his death recently, Mr. A. S. Hersov (National President of the South African Jewish Appeal, equivalent of the American JDC), who headed the Anglo-Transvaal, a mining house with a directorate predominantly Jewish, was also high up in the affairs of the Chamber of Mines.

If the mining industry remains largely in the hands of the English, farming is mainly the preserve of the Afrikaners. South African agriculture is based on the primitive exploitation of semi-slave black labor and is as inefficient as almost anywhere in the world, being able to survive indeed only by means of government subsidies ultimately derived from the gold mines. A number of Jews, however, have concentrated their efforts in certain areas that lend themselves to mechanization, and as a result have become the leading farmers of the country. The Jewish community claims both the "Potato King" and the "Maize King" of South Africa.

In order to illustrate the opportunities which South Africa provided for Jewry, the careers of two immigrants are well worth relating.

The late Senator Samuel Marks, like the vast majority of Jewish immigrants to South Africa, was born in Russia, and he was among the first of the flood from Lithuania and Galicia. Like many of his fellows, coming by way of Britain, Marks and his *"landsman"* and cousin, Isaac Lewis, arrived in the diamond fields of Griqualand West in the middle 1870's. They followed the traditional occupation of poorer Jews in South Africa. As "smouses," traveling hawkers, they went with packs or wagons from farm to farm, trading clothes and household necessities to the white colonists and trinkets to the natives.

Marks and Lewis soon rose from this calling and gradually became interested in mining and industry. In 1884 they moved to the new gold fields of Barberton, in the Boer republic of the Transvaal, and not long after took charge of the first true manufacturing enterprise in the little state on the veld—the distillery, cooperage, and associated workshops called Eerste Fabrieken, which a Hungarian Jew named Alois Hugo Nellmapius had been trying to get started. Thanks to the personal friendship of Marks and Lewis with the Boer President, Paul Kruger—his Calvinist preference for the Old Testament formed a strong link between them—and their innate organizing and financial skill, Eerste Fabrieken became a considerable success, and was followed by jam manufacturing, saddlery, and other plants.

Marks and Lewis acquired huge holdings of land on the banks of the Vaal River where plantations of trees were laid out. In the village of Vereeniging (which today has a population of nearly forty thousand, black and white) they built a brick works, a large milling company, and, in 1911, a steel plant. The Union Steel Corporation only worked with scrap, but it was the forerunner of today's South African steel industry, which now turns out nearly seven hundred thousand tons yearly from South African ores at Pretoria. Marks died in 1920, a Senator of the Union Parliament and one of the wealthiest men in the country.

Israel Lazarus, who is remembered in the Union as the "Mealie King" (mealie being the local word for what Americans call corn), also hailed from Eastern Europe and arrived in South Africa about twenty years after Marks. He too started off shortly before the Boer War, in 1897, trekking round among the farmers as a "smouse." His first tiny shop was destroyed in the Boer War, and after that he turned to farming as a sideline. "I had a horse," Lazarus recounted in after years, "and a shack so tiny that it could not hold both of us. So I slept out in the veld and gave it to the horse." With hardly a penny to his name, he began growing maize near Middelburg, Transvaal, and year by year his holdings increased till he became a figure of national importance. At the climax of his career he produced two hundred thousand bags of potatoes and lesser crops, and several thousand people, black and white, worked for him.

In his handling of labor Lazarus proved exceptionally skillful, and he was particularly popular with the Dutch. Thanks to his example, there is now a large group of Jewish farmers in the Eastern Transvaal. Lazarus died in 1945. It is significant that during the war the government asked him to postpone his proposed retirement, as they felt the country could not afford to see its greatest single farmer go out of business at that time.

This was the pattern of the most successful South African Jews, but it also tells a great deal about those who did not become rich. Today South African Jewry is roughly forty-six per cent native-born. Forty per cent of South African Jews are engaged in commerce, finance, and insurance, another ten per cent are clerks, and eight per cent are in the professions. These figures suggest that South African Jewry is socially even more homogeneous than American Jewry. Besides the fact that a higher proportion are foreign-born—and most of these from Lithuania—we must also note, in contrast to America, that there is a very small Jewish working class. Here in South Africa the Jewish population, though Eastern European, seems to have gone through an evolution much like that followed by the German Jews in the United States.

AGAINST this social and economic background there has been a fairly weak cultural development. Jewish interests and the desire to engage in Jewish activities have been expressed almost entirely through the channels of Zionism and philanthropy.

The two most important Jewish communal institutions are the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the South African Zionist Federation. As in Britain, one of the main internal political issues has been the effort, particularly in evidence during the immediate postwar Zionist upsurge, to turn the Board of Deputies into an appendage of the Zionist Federation. In South Africa there is not that deep attachment to the home country which expresses itself in England in the powerful Anglo-Jewish Association and functions as a corrective to the more extreme forms of Zionism. In South Africa Zionists have for some years formed the majority of the Board of Deputies, and occupy the leading posts in the Jewish community.

The most important activities of the Board, which acts in general as the neutral representative body of South African Jewry, are combating anti-Semitism and promoting racial good will. From time to time the more aggressive Zionists attacked these activities as futile, arguing that the establishment of a Jewish National Home would take care of all Jewish ills, including those specific to South Africa. But saner counsels prevailed, and even during the period of the most intense political activity accompanying the fight for Israel, harmony obtained between the Board and the Zionist Federation. Now, of course, since the victory of the Afrikaner Nationalist party, no one any longer contends that the establishment of Israel has solved the problems of South African Jewry, and the role of the Board has become a delicate one.

The same factors that tended to create a strong Zionism have also tended to promote the growth of Revisionism (the extreme right-wing party in Zionism).

Nevertheless, though stronger than in any other English-speaking country, the Revisionists form only fifteen per cent of the total Zionist strength. The United Zionist party (ideologically General Zionist) has easily the largest following, and was during the last few years rather more moderate than its American counterpart. It was realized that South African Jews could not afford to antagonize British sentiment, which is the main bulwark of democracy against the Afrikaner Nationalist party. Despite this, events in Palestine compelled the Zionists to adopt a line that did antagonize that sentiment to some extent.

Since the establishment of the state of Israel, the same disputes that have perplexed Zionism in other parts of the world have played an important role in South African Jewry. The main question at issue revolves about the future of the Diaspora. While no sharp clash of opinion has as yet begun to manifest itself, it is evident that the Zionists are mostly concerned with Israel and regard it as the central theme of Jewish life in the years ahead. The Board of Deputies, on the other hand, is now mainly concerned with the task of sinking the roots of the community more firmly in the soil of South Africa. Due attention is being paid to Israel as an influence on world Jewry, but not to the exclusion of those cultural forces which spring directly from the immediate South African setting. Jewish life, they feel, must revolve about two foci—Israel and the Diaspora.

IT CANNOT be said that South African Jewry's cultural life is vigorous or on a high level. Nor can that be said of South Africa as a whole. The cleavage between Englishman and Afrikaner has seriously hindered the growth of a strong, indigenous national culture. The culture of the Afrikaner is pronouncedly racial in character and exclusive. English culture has never been a sturdy growth in South Africa, and most South Africans of English blood still have their spiritual roots in Britain.

If we trace the spiritual evolution of the South African Jewish community, we can see that during its early phase it was but a pale echo of life in Eastern Europe. The Jews stood out egregiously from their setting, and this ghettoization was marked in their modest cultural strivings, which were essentially Jewish but narrow.

With the passage of time the ghettos of Johannesburg have physically crumbled and the umbilical cord with Eastern Europe has been severed, but the new infant is still breathing rather asthmatically. While the Zionist struggle was at its height there was not much time or energy left for worry about the moribund spiritual condition of the community. But now that the State of Israel stands, the Board of Deputies is greatly concerned to foster a spirit of Judaism that is also related to the indigenous scene and to the aspirations of the South African nation as a whole. We are now entering a new epoch, and, like all new epochs, it has much in it that is perilous and unpredictable. The tasks ahead are being tackled seriously, for it is recognized that failure will result in an increase of assimilationism.

IN RELATION to general culture, it was inevitable that the Jews in South Africa should orient themselves toward Britain. We can point to quite a few figures of Jewish descent who have played a role in Anglo-South African culture, though Sarah Gertrude Millin is the only one of them to have won international notice. Also, there are a large number of Jewish painters, sculptors, and theatrical people, whose level of activity, though still colonial, is moving perceptibly upward.

More recently, a number of books by South African Jewish writers have received favorable notice—among them, *Black Anger* by Dr. Wulf Sachs, which was also published and praised in the United States; a volume of Afrikaans poetry by Olga Kirsch; a semi-autobiographical study by the writer of this article; and a collection of short stories by Nadine Gordimer. There is, however, nothing specifically Jewish about Dr. Sachs's psychoanalytic study of a native, or in Olga Kirsch's and Nadine Gordimer's books, while my autobiobiography, though its central theme is Jewish, has been aptly described by the Jewish press here as the product of a cosmopolitan mind with a leftish slant. Nothing has as yet appeared from the pen of a Jewish writer that can be accounted as a genuine literary approach to the essential South African Jew. This is a serious reflection on the community, but there is no likelihood of a change for the better until the Jew can begin to feel that his destiny is permanently linked with South Africa, and that his creative impulse must grow primarily from the spiritual ferment of his immediate environment.

Jews have distinguished themselves in the legal and medical professions, and a number have reached eminent positions in the academic world. Of the latter quite a few have gone overseas where greater opportunities offer. S. Zuckerman (Birmingham), S. H. Frankel (Oxford), and M. Gluckman (Manchester) are three South African Jews who occupy important professorial posts at leading English universities. More recently, Israel has joined England in robbing us of much of our talent: Aubrey Eban is the most prominent South African to achieve eminence as an Israeli, but there have been many others.

The South African Jewish press, however, is one of the bright spots in the picture. This is partly due to the generous budgets that advertising revenue puts at the disposal of publishers. There is one Yiddish weekly, two official Zionist weeklies in English, and an English independent weekly, the *S.A. Jewish Times,* which is the most widely read of all these. Three years ago the Board of Deputies launched a cultural monthly, *Jewish Affairs,* that has maintained a fairly high level, but whose weakness is a lack of creative writing. We just do not have the talent as yet. Jewish writers and editors have also been prominent in three general magazines—*Forum, Common Sense,* and *Trek*—which many foreign observers consider the most revealing and interesting of South African publications.

While Jews are prominent in the South African theatrical world, Jewish theater as such is non-existent. The one or two companies that have visited us from overseas have concentrated on entertainment and profits rather than on dramatic art.

Jews are prominent in politics and in the trade unions, but not exceptionally so.

To sum up the present state of South African Jewish culture: It is still young and raw, and lacks the mellowing influences of tradition. The first generation of South African Jews seems to have expended all its energy in the struggle for existence in the wilds of Africa. The second generation has succeeded in stabilizing itself economically, but is still diverting much of its vitality to business. It may be that the next generation will throw up a more culturally productive class.

EVEN after two years of Nationalist power, it is still not easy to foresee the ultimate effect on South African Jewry of the new regime. The Nationalist party has persistently proclaimed its belief in democratic precepts, and it waged its campaign by purely constitutional methods. But at the same time it unscrupulously exploited racial issues—the majority of Afrikaners feel like many Southerners in the United States—to rally to its standards almost the whole of Afrikanerdom, which forms the majority of the electorate. That its expression of democratic principles is not to be taken without a grain of salt is clear from the war record of the Nationalist party. Studiously pro-Hitler from 1933 onwards, it turned openly collaborationist during the war, and only began to soft-pedal its pro-Nazism when it became evident that Hitler was on the way out. But the nostalgia for Hitlerism remains with a fairly large section of its membership.

Originally this party was purely anti-imperialist, hoping to cancel the Boer defeat of 1902 through the ballot box. It was actually formed in 1912, when time had softened the shock of defeat. It was not anti-Semitic, and in 1924 a large number of Jews interested in promoting native industry helped it to gain the majority over the imperial-minded General Smuts, who was inclined to depend unduly on British manufacturers. The economic crisis of 1933 led to the break-up of the Nationalist government, a section under General Hertzog and Mr. Pirow going over to General Smuts and forming a new government, with the extreme Nationalists under Dr. Malan remaining outside the coalition. No longer trammeled by the moderates, the Nationalist program now tended to become racially exclusive—and with the victorious progress of Hitler, perceptibly anti-Semitic. In September 1939 it voted against South Africa's entry into the war, and was joined by General Hertzog and Mr. Pirow, who were openly pro-Nazi by that time. They had only entered into the alliance with General Smuts in 1933 for tactical reasons, as became evident with the turn of events.

There were a number of circumstances that had conspired to drive the Nationalist party into the pro-Nazi fold:

(1) The Afrikaners have strong ties with the Germans, from whose stock many of them spring. Many of their sons have attended German universities.

(2) There is still much anti-British feeling amongst the Afrikaners. Germany, the enemy of Britain, offered the hope of settling old scores.

(3) There is a tremendous poor-white problem on the land. About a quarter of the Afrikaner farmers do not own the land they work and there has set in among them the kind of spiritual degeneration described in Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road*. Hitlerism gave them a new hope, as it did to the *"Lumpen"* in the Berlin tenement houses. The slogan, "The Jews are our misfortune," proved an acceptable and satisfyingly simple explanation of their misery and want.

(4) The Afrikaners as a whole, predominantly farmers in the past, are trying to gain a foothold in commerce and industry, an inevitable, and, insofar as it will help eliminate the poverty of the hinterland, even progressive, solution. But it becomes reactionary when, instead of using talent and ability to win its place, extreme Afrikanerdom whips up racial feeling and hopes to use the state apparatus in order to squeeze the economic life out of first the Indians and the Jews—the weaker—and then the Englishmen. This tendency was more noticeable during the Nazi upsurge than it is now. Today it is only the Indians who are being hammered.

With the downfall of Nazi Germany, pro-German and anti-British feeling has been rendered largely irrelevant, and with it the openly Nazi-Fascist groups. But the poor white problem and the Afrikaner's movement into urban occupations still continue and remain a significant potential fuel supply for a strong anti-Semitic movement.

However, there are also moderate elements in the Nationalist party, rich farmers and a fringe of industrialists who have something to lose, as against the poor whites who have not. Before the Nationalist electoral victory, these elements were aware that their extreme program on the color and Jewish question would win them the serious displeasure of the UN and make more difficult South Africa's effort to raise loans abroad and incorporate South-West Africa into the Union; the Jewish question was not featured in the Nationalist election propaganda. Many of them also believe that the Anglo-American front is sufficiently anti-Communist for them to find a congenial home there. Thus two years ago the Nationalists gave their blessings to a South African loan of eighty million pounds to Britain, on the grounds that

Britain had to be saved from Communism.

Since the Nationalist victory Jews have waited to see, with some trepidation, whether the rich or the poor farmer would become dominant in the Nationalist party. Meanwhile, the Nationalist government has pursued an extreme and obnoxious policy towards the Natives, Coloreds, and Indians, in accordance with their "Southern" mentality, but have left the Jews strictly alone. There is no reason to believe that they will move against them in the foreseeable future. The Nationalist leaders combine practical Calvinism with peasant shrewdness. They realize only too well that with the disappearance of Hitler they no longer have any bases of support in the outside world, and that the present political climate is by no means favorable to racist doctrines. The feats of the Israeli Army and the anti-British tinge that Zionist policy assumed in the final phase of the Palestine struggle have definitely impressed the Afrikaners and brought a new respect for the Jews in general. Also, the Nationalist majority is far too slender for an adventurous policy. The shadow of economic depression that was spreading ominously over the land revealed how weak the present government was, and it suffered a setback in the last by-election. What is more, extreme Afrikanerdom greatly displeases Minister Havenga, the leader of the Afrikaner party, which is part of the governing coalition and upon whose continued support the Nationalist regime depends for its life.

A serious economic crisis might still, however, bring to the fore those extreme Afrikaner politicians who favor a master-race policy. But without external support they could never hope to overcome the resistance of the English and the Jews, who together control the main economic levers. The South African Englishman suffers, no doubt, from racial hauteur, which expresses itself in the exclusion of Jews from some of his clubs and golf courses; and the terrorist phase in Palestine also generated much anti-Jewish feeling among the English. But the English realize only too well that in the face of the threat from fascist Afrikanerdom they stand or fall with the Jews.

The devaluation of sterling has greatly helped the gold mines, and we can look forward to an improvement in the economic position of South Africa. As far as one can foresee, South Africa will continue to float tranquilly on the "fat" extracted from the bowels of the earth, as it has done for a generation, and the Jews will float with the other white racial groups—that is, as long as the colored races are prepared to acquiesce, and more or less "normal" conditions prevail in the outside world.

THE FASTEST RUNNER ON SIXTY-FIRST STREET

A Story

JAMES T. FARRELL

MORTY AIKEN liked to run and to skate. He liked running games and races. He liked running so much that sometimes he'd go over to Washington Park all by himself, and run just for the fun of it. He got a kick out of running, and he had raced every kid he could get to run against him. His love of racing and running had even become a joke among many of the boys he knew. But even when they gave him the horselaugh it was done in a good-natured way, because he was a very popular boy. Older fellows liked him, and when they would see him, they'd say there's a damn good kid, and a damned fast runner.

When he'd passed his fourteenth birthday, Morty was a trifle smaller than most boys of his own age. But he was well known, and in a way, almost famous, in his own neighborhood. He lived at Sixty-first and Eberhardt, but kids in the whole area had heard of him, and many of them would speak of what a runner and what a skater Morty Aiken was.

He won medals in playground tournaments, and, in fact, he was the only lad from his school who had ever won medals in these tournaments. In the playground tournament he became the champion in the fifty- and hundred-yard dash, and this got him the reputation of being the best runner, for his age, on the South Side of Chicago.

And he was as fast a skater as he was a runner. In winter, he was regularly and almost daily to be seen on the ice at the Washington Park lagoon, or over on the Midway. He had a pair of Johnson racers which his father had given him, and he treasured these more than any other possession. His mother knitted him red socks and a red stocking cap for skating, and he had a red and white sweater. When he skated, he was like a streak of red; and his sense of himself and of his body on the ice was sure and right. Almost every day, there would be a game of I-Got-It. The skater who had *it* would skate in a wide circle, chased by the pack until he was caught. Morty loved to play I-Got-It, and on many a day this boy in short pants, wearing the red stocking cap, the red and white sweater, and the thick, knitted red woolen socks coming above the black shoes of his Johnson racers, would lead the pack, circling around and around and around, his head forward, his upper torso bent forward, his hands behind his back, his legs working with grace and giving him a speed which sometimes seemed miraculous. And in February 1919 Morty competed in an ice derby, conducted under the auspices of the Chicago *Clarion*. He won two gold medals. His picture was on the first page of the sports section of the Sunday *Clarion*. All in all, he was a famous and celebrated lad. His father and mother were proud of him. His teacher and Mrs. Bixby, the principal of the school, were proud of him. Merchants on Sixty-first Street were proud of him. There was not a lad in the neighborhood who was greeted on the street by strangers as often as Morty.

ALTHOUGH he was outwardly modest, Morty had his dreams. He graduated from grammar school in 1919, and was planning

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THE books of JAMES T. FARRELL, best known and most widely read of the current representatives of American naturalism, have been sold in the hundreds of thousands in the United States and Europe. Mr. Farrell made his reputation with the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy in 1932-1935, and since then has published eight more novels, carrying on a monumental chronicle of American life comparable in scope to Balzac's *Comédie Humaine*. Mr. Farrell was born in Chicago in 1904.

to go to Park High in the fall. He was impatient to go to high school, and to get into high school track meets. He'd never been coached, and yet look how good he was! What wouldn't he be when he had some coaching? He'd be a streak of lightning if there ever was one. He dreamed that he would be called the Human Streak of Lightning. And after high school, there would be college, college track meets, and the Big Ten championship, and after that, he would join an athletic club and run in track meets, and he would win a place on the Olympic team and somewhere, in Paris or Rome or some European city, he would beat the best runners in the world, and, like Ty Cobb in baseball and Jess Willard in prize fighting, he'd be the world's champion runner.

And girls would all like him, and the most beautiful girl in the world would marry him. He liked girls, but girls liked him even more than he liked them. In May, a little while before his graduation, the class had a picnic, and they played postoffice. The postoffice was behind a clump of bushes in Jackson Park. He was called to the postoffice more than any other of the boys. There was giggling and talking and teasing, but it hadn't bothered him, especially because he knew that the other fellows liked and kind of envied him. To Morty, this was only natural. He accepted it. He accepted the fact that he was a streak of lightning with his feet, and on the ice, and that this made him feel somehow different from other boys and very important. Even Tony Rabuski looked at him in this way, and if any kid would have picked on him, Tony would have piled into that kid. Tony was the toughest kid in school, and he was also considered to be the dumbest. He was, also, the poorest. Often, he came to school wearing a black shirt, because a black shirt didn't show the dirt the way that other shirts did. His parents couldn't afford to buy him many shirts. One day Tony was walking away from school with Morty, and Tony said:

"Kid, you run de fastest, I fight de best in de whole school. We make a crack up team. We're pals. Shake kid, we're pals."

Morty shook Tony's hand. For a fourteen-year-old boy, Tony had very big and strong hands. The other kids sometimes called them "meat hooks."

Morty looked on this handshake as a pledge. He and Tony became friends, and they were often together. Morty had Tony come over to his house to play, and sometimes Tony stayed for a meal. Tony ate voraciously and wolfishly. When Morty's parents spoke of the way Tony ate and of the quantity of food he ate, Morty would reply by telling them that Tony was his friend.

Because he was poor and somewhat stupid, a dull and fierce resentment smouldered in Tony. Other boys out-talked him, and they were often able to plague and annoy him, and then outrun him because he was heavy-footed. The kids used to laugh at Tony because they said he had lead, iron, and bricks in his big feet. After they'd shaken hands and became pals, Morty never would join the other boys in razzing Tony. And he and Tony doped out a way that would permit Tony to get even. If some of the boys made game of Tony until he was confused and enraged and went for them, Morty would chase the boys. He had no difficulty in catching one of them. When he caught one of the boys who'd been teasing and annoying Tony, he'd usually manage to hold the boy until Tony would lumber up and exact his punishment and revenge. Sometimes, Tony would be cruel, and on a couple of occasions when Tony, in a dull and stupefied rage, was sitting on a hurt, screaming boy, and pounding him, Morty ordered Tony to lay off. Tony did so instantly. Morty didn't want Tony to be too cruel. He had come to like Tony and to look on him as a big brother. He'd always wanted a brother, and sometimes he would imagine how wonderful it would be if Tony could even come to live at his house.

The system Morty and Tony worked out, with Morty chasing and catching one of the boys who ragged Tony, worked out well. Soon, the kids stopped ragging Tony. Because of their fear, and because they liked and respected Morty and wanted him to play with them, they began to accept Tony. And Tony began to change. Once accepted, so that he was no longer the butt of jokes, he looked on all the boys in Morty's gang as his pals. He would protect them as he would protect Morty. Tony had used to scowl and make fierce and funny faces and act in many odd little ways. After he became accepted, as a result of being Morty's pal, his behavior changed, and because he was strong and could fight, the boys began to admire him. At times he really hoped for strange boys to come around the neighborhood, and to act like bullies so that he could beat them up. He wanted to fight and punch because he could feel powerful and could be praised and admired, and that helped him to think more of himself.

EVER since he had been a little fellow, Tony had often been called a "Polack" or a "dirty Polack." After he became one of the gang or group around Morty, some of the boys would tell him that he was a "white Polack." In his slow way, he thought about these words and what they meant. When you were called certain words, you were laughed at, you were looked at as if something was wrong with you. If you were a Polack, many girls didn't want to have anything to do with you. The boys and girls who weren't Polacks had fun together that Polacks couldn't have. Being a Polack and being called a Polack was like being called a son of a bitch. It was a name. When you were called a name like this, you were looked at as a different kind of a kid from one who wasn't called a name. Morty Aiken wasn't called names. Tony didn't want to be called names. And if he fought and beat up those who called him names, they would be afraid of him. He wanted that. But he also wanted to have as much fun as the kids had who weren't called these names. And he worked it out that these kids felt better when they called other kids names. He could fight and he could call names, and if he called a kid a name, and that kid got tough, he could beat him up. He began to call names. And there was a name even worse than Polack—"nigger." If Tony didn't like a kid, he called him a "nigger." And he talked about the "niggers." He felt as good as he guessed these other kids did when he talked about the "niggers." And they could be beat up. They weren't supposed to go to Washington Park because that was a park for the whites. That was what he had often heard.

He heard it said so much that he believed it. He sometimes got a gang of the boys together and they would roam Washington Park, looking for colored boys to beat up. Morty went with them. He didn't particularly like to beat anyone up, but when they saw a colored kid and chased him, he would always be at the head, and he would be the one who caught the colored boy. He could grab or tackle him, and by that time, the others would catch up. He worked the same plan that he and Tony had worked against the other boys. And after they caught and beat up a colored boy, they would all talk and shout and brag about what they had done, and talk about how they had each gotten in their licks and punches and kicks, and how fast Morty had run to catch that shine, and what a sock Tony had given him, and talking all together and strutting and bragging, they felt good and proud of themselves, and they talked about how the Sixty-first Street boys would see to it that Washington Park would stay a white man's park.

And this became more and more important to Tony. There were those names, "Polack," "dirty Polack," "white Polack." If you could be called a "Polack," you weren't considered white. Well, when he beat them up, was he or wasn't he white? They knew. After the way he clouted these black ones, how could the other kids not say that Tony Rabuski wasn't white? That showed them all. That showed he was a hero. He was a hero as much as Morty Aiken was.

MORTY was a proud boy on the night that he graduated from grammar school in

June 1919. When he received his diploma, there was more applause in the auditorium than there was for any other member of the class. He felt good when he heard this clapping, but then, he expected it. He lived in a world where he was somebody, and he was going into a bigger world where he would still be somebody. He was a fine, frank-looking lad, with dark hair, frank blue eyes, even and friendly features. He was thin but strong. He wore a new short-pants blue-serge suit with a belted coat, and a white shirt with a white bow tie. His class colors, orange and black ribbons, were pinned on the lapel of his coat. He was scrubbed and washed and combed. And he was in the midst of an atmosphere of gaiety and friendliness. The teachers were happy. There were proud and happy parents and aunts and uncles and older sisters. The local alderman made a speech, praising everybody, and speaking of the graduating boys and girls as fine future Americans. And he declared that in their midst there were many promising lads and lassies, who would live to enjoy great esteem and success. He also said that among this group, there was also one who promised to become a stellar athlete, and who had already won gold medals and honors.

And on that night, Morty's father and mother were very happy. They kept beaming with proud smiles. Morty was their only son. Mr. Aiken was a carpenter. He worked steadily, and had saved his money so that the house he owned was now paid for. He and his wife were quiet-living people who minded their own business. Mr. Aiken was tall and rugged, with swarthy skin, a rough-hewn face, and the look and manner of a workman. He was a gentle but firm man, and was inarticulate with his son. He believed that a boy should have a good time in sports, should fight his own battles, and that boyhood—the best time of one's life—should be filled with happy memories.

The mother was faded and maternal. She usually had little to say, and her life was dedicated to caring for her son and her husband, and to keeping their home clean and orderly. She was especially happy to know that Morty liked running and skating because these were not dangerous.

After the graduation ceremonies, the father and mother took Morty home where they had cake and ice cream. The three of them sat together, eating these refreshments, quiet, but happy. The two parents were deeply moved. They were filled with gratification because of the applause given their son when he had walked forward on the stage to receive his diploma. They were raising a fine boy, and they could look people in the neighborhood in the eye and know that they had done their duty as parents. The father was putting money by for Morty's college education, and hoped that, besides becoming a famous runner, Morty would become a professional man. He talked of this to the son and the mother over their ice cream and cake, and the boy seemed to accept his father's plans. And as the father gazed shyly at Morty he thought of his own boyhood on a Wisconsin farm, and of long summer days there. Morty had the whole summer before him. He would play and grow and enjoy himself. He was not a bad boy, he had never gotten into trouble, he wasn't the kind of a boy who caused worry. It was fine. In August there would be his vacation and they would all go to Wisconsin, and he would go fishing with the boy.

That evening, Morty's parents went to bed, feeling that this was the happiest day of their lives.

And Morty went to bed, a happy light-hearted boy, thinking of the summer vacation which had now begun.

THE days passed. Some days were better than others. Some days there was little to do, and on other days, there was a lot to do. Morty guessed that this was, anyway, turning out to be as good as any summer he could remember.

Tony Rabuski was working, delivering flowers for a flower merchant, but he sometimes came around after supper, and the kids sat talking or playing on the steps of Morty's house, or of another house in the neighborhood. Morty liked to play Run Sheep Run, because it gave him a chance to run, and, also, he liked the hiding and the searching, and the hearing of the signals called out, and the excitement and the tingling and the fun when he'd be hiding, perhaps under some porch,. and the other side would be near, maybe even passing right by, and he, and the other kids with him, would have to be so still, and he'd even try to hold his breath, and then finally, the signal for which he had been waiting—Run Sheep Run—and the race, setting off, tearing away along sidewalks and across streets, running like hell and like a streak of lightning, and feeling your speed in your legs and muscles and getting first to the goal.

The summer was going by, and it was fun. There wasn't a lot of worry on his mind, and there were dreams. Edna Purcell, who had been in his class, seemed sweet on him, and she was a wonderful girl. One night she and some other girls came around, and they sat on the steps of Morty's house, and played tin-tin. Morty had to kiss her. He did, with the kids laughing, and it seemed that something happened to him. He hadn't been shy when he was with girls, but now, when Edna was around, he would be shy. She was wonderful. She was more than wonderful. When he did have the courage to talk to her, he talked about running and ice skating. She told him she knew what a runner and skater he was. A fast skater, such as he was, wouldn't want to think of skating with someone like her. He said that he would, and that next winter he would teach her to skate better. Immediately, he found himself wishing that it were already next winter, and he would imagine himself skating with her, and he would imagine them walking over to the Washington Park lagoon, and their coming home again. He would carry her skates, and when they breathed they would be able to see their breaths, and the weather would be cold and sharp and would make her red cheeks redder, and they would be alone, walking home, with the snow packed on the park, alone, the two of them walking in the park, with it quiet, so quiet that you would hear nothing, and it would be like they were in another world, and then, there in the quiet park, with white snow all over it, he would kiss Edna Purcell. He had kissed Edna, playing tin-tin, and postoffice, but he looked forward to the day that he got from her the kiss that would mean that she was his girl, his sweetheart, and the girl who would one day be his wife just like his mother was his father's wife. Everything he dreamed of doing, all the honors he would get, all of the medals and cups he dreamed of winning—now all of this would be for Edna. And she was also going to Park High. He would walk to school with her, eat lunch with her, walk her home from school. When he ran in high school track meets for Park High, Edna would be in the stands. He would give her his medals. He wanted to give her one of his gold skating medals, but he didn't know how to go about asking her to accept it.

No matter what Morty thought about, he thought about Edna at the same time. He thought about her every time he dreamed. When he walked on streets in the neighborhood, he thought of her. When he went to Washington Park or swimming, he thought of Edna. Edna, just to think of her, Edna made everything in the world wonderfully wonderful.

And thus the summer of 1919 was passing for Morty.

MORTY sat on the curb with a group of boys, and they were bored and restless. They couldn't agree about what game to play, where to go, what to do to amuse themselves. A couple of them started to play knife but gave it up. Morty suggested a race, but no one would race him. They couldn't agree on playing ball. One boy suggested swimming, but no one would go with him. Several of the boys wrestled, and a fight almost resulted. Morty sat by himself, and thought about Edna. He guessed that he'd rather be with her than with the kids. He didn't know where she was. If he knew that she'd gone swimming, he'd go swimming.

He didn't know what to do with himself. If he only could find Edna and if they would do something together, or go somewhere, like Jackson Park Beach, with just the two of them, why then, he knew that today would be the day that he would find a way of giving her one of his *Clarion* gold medals. But he didn't know where she was.

Tony Rabuski came around with four tough-looking kids. Tony had lost his job, and he said that the niggers had jumped him when he was delivering flowers down around Forty-seventh Street, and he wanted his pals to stick by him. He told them what had happened but they didn't get it, because Tony couldn't tell a story straight. Tony asked them didn't they know what was happening? There were race riots and the beaches and Washington Park and the whole South Side were full of dark clouds, and over on Wentworth Avenue the big guys were fighting, and the dark clouds were out after whites. They didn't believe Tony. But Morty said it was in the newspapers, and that there were race riots. The bored boys became excited. They bragged about what they would do if the jigs came over to their neighborhood. Tony said they had to get some before they got this far. When asked where they were, Tony said all over. Finally, they went over to Washington Park, picking up sticks and clubs and rocks on the way. The park was calm. A few adults were walking and strolling about. A lad of eighteen or nineteen lay under a tree with his head in the lap of a girl who was stroking his hair. Some of the kids smirked and leered as they passed the couple. Morty thought of Edna and wished that he could take her to Washington Park and kiss her. There were seven or eight rowboats on the lagoon, but all of the occupants were white. The park sheep were grazing. Tony threw a rock at them, frightening the sheep, and they all ran, but no cop was around to shag them. They passed the boat house, talking and bragging. They now believed the rumors which they themselves had made up. White girls and women were in danger and anything might happen. A tall lad sat in the grass with a nursemaid. A baby buggy was near them. The lad called them over and asked them what they were doing with their clubs and rocks. Tony said they were looking for niggers. The lad said that he'd seen two near the goldfish pond, and urged the boys to go and get the sons of bitches. Screaming and shouting, they ran to the goldfish pond. Suddenly, Tony shouted:

"Dark clouds."

THEY ran. Two Negro boys, near the goldfish pond, heard Tony's cry, and then the other cry, and they ran. The mob of boys chased them. Morty was in the lead. Running at the head of the screaming, angry pack of boys, he forgot everything except how well and how fast he was running, and images of Edna flashed in and out of his mind. If she could see him running! He was running beautifully. He'd catch them. He was gaining. The colored boys ran in a northwest direction. They crossed the drive which flanked the southern end of the Washington Park ball field. Morty was stopped by a funeral procession. The other boys caught up with him. When the funeral procession passed, it was too late to try and catch the colored boys they had been chasing. Angry, bragging, they crossed over to the ball field, and marched across it, shouting and yelling. They picked up about eight boys of their own age, and three older lads of seventeen or eighteen. The older lads said they knew where they'd find some shines. Now was the time to teach them their place once and for all. Led by the older boys, they emerged from the north end of Washington Park, and marched down Grand Boulevard, still picking up men and boys as they went along. One of the men who joined them had a gun. They screamed, looked in doorways for Negroes, believed everything anyone said about Negroes and kept boasting about what they would do when they found some.

"Dark clouds," Tony boomed.

The mob let out. They crossed to the other side of Grand Boulevard and ran cursing and shouting after a Negro. Morty was in the lead. He was out-running the men and the older fellows. He heard them shouting behind him. He was running. He was running like the playground hundred-yard champion of the South Side of Chicago. He was running like the future Olympic champion. He was running like he'd run for Edna. He was tearing along, pivoting out of the way of shocked, surprised pedestrians, running, really running. He was running like a streak of lightning.

The Negro turned east on Forty-eighth Street. He had a start of a block. But Morty would catch him. He turned into Forty-eighth Street. He tore along the center of the street. He began to breathe heavily. But he couldn't stop running now. He was out-distancing the gang, and he was racing his own gang and the Negro he was chasing. Down the center of the street and about a half a block ahead of him, the Negro was tearing away for dear life. But Morty was gaining on him. Gaining. He was now about a half a block ahead of his own gang. They screamed murderously behind him. And they encouraged him. He heard shouts of encouragement.

"Catch 'em, Morty boy!"

"Thata boy, Morty boy!"

He heard Tony's voice. He ran.

The Negro turned into an alley, just east of Forestville. Morty ran. He turned into the alley just in time to see the fleeing Negro spurt into a yard in the center of the block. He'd gained more. He was way ahead of the white mob. Somewhere behind him, they were coming and yelling. He tore on. He had gained his second wind. He felt himself running, felt the movement of his legs, and muscles, felt his arms, felt the sensation of his whole body as he raced down the alley. Never had he run so swiftly. Suddenly Negroes jumped out of yards. He was caught and pinioned. His only thought was one of surprise. Before he even realized what had happened, his throat was slashed. He fell, bleeding. The Negroes disappeared. Feebly, he mumbled just once:

"Mother!"

He lay bleeding in the center of the dirty alley, and when the gang of whites caught up with him they found him dead in dirt and his own blood in the center of the alley. No Negroes were in sight. The whites surrounded his body. The boys trembled with fear. Some of them cried. One wet his pants. Then they became maddened. And they stood in impotent rage around the bleeding, limp body of Morty Aiken, the fastest runner on Sixty-first Street.

NADELMAN: RECLUSE OF RIVERDALE

The Artist as Personality

ALFRED WERNER

IN THE early years of this century there was an impecunious young Jewish sculptor who kept a dingy little studio on the Left Bank in Paris, worked hard, and rarely appeared in the cafés. This solitary, shy youth of twenty-one or twenty-two, who went around in a turtleneck sweater, was strikingly handsome with his deep-set "Semitic" eyes and sensitive mouth. Women called him "Nadelman le Beau." We do not really know how he reacted to his feminine admirers, but he had many. His appearance cut more of a figure at first than his art.

As it was in the beginning so was it in the end. Elie Nadelman remains more interesting for his personality and his story than for his art—as intriguing as that was in certain aspects. His sculptures and drawings amount to only a footnote in the history of modern art, despite the artist's own claims to the contrary. Compared with the work of such innovators as Brancusi, Lehmbruck, and Lipchitz, Nadelman's *oeuvre,* delightful as it is, suffers from a lack of substantial originality. He was, in the final analysis, just one of fifty or more extremely talented artists who lent charm and gaiety to the first two decades of this century but whose work, because it was still fixed in the past, failed to answer the feelings of a newer generation, which had to turn to less amiable but more vigorous and enterprising artists for the satisfaction of its demands. Nevertheless, Elie Nadelman's story does not deserve to go unremembered. It is a part of the history of the Jew as an artist in the Gentile world.

NADELMAN was born in Warsaw on February 20, 1882 (not 1885, as some reference works have it). Thus he belongs to the generation of Moise Kogan, Benno Elkan, Jacob Epstein, and Arnold Zadikow, to name a few other modern sculptors of Jewish origin. His parents, Philip and Hannah Nadelman, seem to have been more or less assimilated; his father was a jeweler and goldsmith addicted to philosophizing but apparently not interested in giving his children a particularly Jewish background. Still, he chose to call his seventh child after "Elijah the Prophet"—possibly it was only after a relative or friend, however. There were artists, writers, and musicians on his mother's side of the family, and this may explain why Elie was spared the usual tribulations of artistically inclined young Jews in the Pale of that time. His early career was in sharp contrast to that of Chaim Soutine, for instance, who had to flee his native *shtetl* in order to practice his art.

Never in later life did Nadelman show any particularly marked emotional or intellectual ties with Judaism. Nor are there any traces in his work itself of the environment of his childhood. Though throughout his life he felt great interest in the folk art of many nations and permitted his own sculp-

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ELIE NADELMAN'S posthumous re-emergence from obscurity has been an interesting development in the American art scene of the last few years. Here ALFRED WERNER casts some light on his personality as well as his art. Dr. Werner was born in Vienna in 1911. Abroad he was an editor of *Gerechtigkeit,* an anti-Nazi weekly, and *Die Stimme,* a bi-weekly devoted to Jewish affairs, and he also published several volumes of verse and literary criticism in German. Imprisoned in Dachau for six months shortly before the outbreak of the war, he emigrated from Germany immediately after his release and came to this country, where he has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, the New York *Times Book Review,* the *Saturday Review of Literature,* the *American Scholar,* the *Nation,* the *New Republic,* and the Anglo-Jewish press. His most recent article in these pages was on the late Yankel Adler, the painter, in the September 1949 issue.

ture to be molded by it, his attention never fell on the folk art of his native Jewish milieu in Poland. And in middle life he married an American Catholic of German descent.

In the large literature about Nadelman I could find only few references to his Jewishness. In the defunct magazine *East and West* (August 1915), John Weichsel, after declaring that this cosmopolitan's art was indebted to many ages and cultures, went on to say: "Only the inveterate intellectualistic leanings link him with his early nurture, and, perhaps, with inherited proclivities of a race of incorrigible rationalizers." Martin Birnbaum, in *International Studio* (December 1915), deplored the fact that Nadelman was putting "his intelligence and acquired Gallic taste into his work, rather than his native Semitic passion."

It is not altogether unlikely that Nadelman, like many assimilated Warsaw Jews of 1900, leaned somewhat towards Polish nationalism at first. Before leaving his native country for Munich and Paris, the young artist took part in a competition held under the auspices of *Sztuka* ("Art"), a nationalist Polish periodical published in Cracow, and he upheld an aggressive Polish cultural irridentism. (Nadelman won *Sztuka's* 1902 prize with a project for a memorial to Chopin.)

His interest in things Polish must have continued for quite a while after he left his native country; he had long been in this country when he gave his American-born son a Polish first name. And American critics persisted in referring to him as a Pole for a good while longer. Yet he never went back to Poland for a visit, though his parents remained there and lived long enough to hear of his success. Nor, according to his diligent biographer Lincoln Kirstein (to whose writings I am indebted for much of my information), is his name to be found in bibliographies of 20th-century Polish art.

But whether as Pole or Jew, Frenchman or American, Nadelman seems to have lived under a lucky star. While serving in the Czarist army he was given such soft jobs as decorating the officers' mess halls and teaching their children. In Paris a small allowance from his family afforded him at least an impoverished security. It was not wasted on this ambitious and energetic young man, who worked hard and lived frugally. Gertrude Stein claimed that Nadelman rarely left his small studio off the Rue Vaugirard during daylight for anything more distracting than to meditate on the Seine bank. André Gide compared his studio to an animal's lair.

According to Gide, who was thirteen years his senior, Nadelman lived in Paris in dire poverty for a period of six years before he won his first success. "Isolated in his den, he seemed to live on plaster; Balzac might have invented him." His first one-man show at the Galerie Druet in 1909 is reported as a triumph. Mr. Kirstein wants us to believe that it "was the marvel of the studios and bistros of Montparnasse" and that it created "the greatest interest of any sculpture show since Rodin's retrospective at the International Exhibition of 1900." But at a distance of four decades the marble and plaster heads Nadelman exhibited at the Galerie Druet reveal nothing more remarkable than some superb echoes of the Venus of Milo, the Nike of Samothrace, and other Hellenic statues the young artist had admired and studied at the Louvre. We can see why the modernists of Paris jokingly called him "Praxiteleman" and "Phidiasohn."

Yet there were certain drawings and pieces of sculpture that hinted at a search for new paths. Gide was taken to see Nadelman's work by Alexandre Natanson, a Polish Jew who, with his brother, Thadée, had founded the distinguished *Revue Blanche*. Gide wrote (1909): "Nadelman draws with a compass and sculpts by assembling rhombs. He has discovered that each curve of the human body is accompanied by a reciprocal curve opposite it and corresponding to it." These remarks are to be found in the first volume of Gide's *Journal*, and Nadelman's admirers, Mr. Kirstein above all, quote them as additional support for the artist's own claim that he originated Cubism—a movement, incidentally, that he also loathed. But his name is never mentioned in works on Cubism. The accepted version is that Cubism was founded by Picasso and Braque under the inspiration of Cézanne's painting and his dictum: "You must see in nature the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone." Picasso's monumental painting, now in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon," which he did in 1907, is supposed to be the first Cubist picture, and his "Head" of 1909 the first piece of Cubist sculpture.

Mr. Kirstein, in the catalogue he compiled for the Nadelman retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in 1948 (*The Sculpture of Elie Nadelman,* Museum of Modern Art, 1948, 64 pp., $2.00), reproduces a "Cubist" head executed by Nadelman two years before Picasso's head. And Nadelman's drawings of 1904-07 show that he had begun by that time to analyze volumes into spherical planes. Did Picasso steal and pervert Nadelman's discoveries, as the latter used to insinuate? It does not really make much difference, since what counts in art is realization, not discovery—as Picasso himself has said. Yet if Nadelman did discover the formal principles of Cubism, his role should have been acknowledged. There is unconscious pathos in a letter Nadelman wrote in 1925 to Henry Goddard Leach, editor of the *Forum,* in which he said that he was the father of a movement that had gone astray. In drafts of this letter (preserved at the Museum of Modern Art) he claimed to be "the only artist who can thoroughly explain and prove the meaning of Cubism and its origin, since I am the discoverer of Abstract Form in the Plastic Arts, and Cubism is only a burlesque exaggeration of the Abstract Form through which I interpret nature." Picasso, he asserted, by piling abstract forms "pell-mell" and abandoning nature, had created a mere "sensational novelty" that was neither meaningful nor important. To the end, Nadelman was deeply hurt at not being acknowledged as the father of the illegitimate child he detested.

Yet by far the largest part of his pre-1914 sculpture was the product of classical Greek influence. It is, of course, no more a literal or pedestrian imitation of Phidias and Praxiteles than is the art of Donatello. Athens, Florence, and Paris all met in the talented hands of this Polish Jew, who gave his busts the same charm and natural elegance that made his person so attractive. The charm is slightly perfumed, but it is genuine nonetheless—perhaps even more so in the marble.

None of this has prevented Nadelman's present admirers—who in the last two years have undertaken to revive and rehabilitate his reputation with an ardor and on a scale that appears unprecedented—from proclaiming him a leader of modernism. They do this in good faith. But it remains an established fact that he was the foe, not only of Cubism, but of Fauvism and all the other new trends of our time. An excitable and exciting talker, he would attack these movements vehemently at the Rotonde and the Dôme in Paris, after his success of 1909. (He visited these cafés with Modigliani and Pascin—both Jews, the former from Italy, the latter from Bulgaria; Pascin was his closest friend among artists at that time.) And he would warmly defend Rodin, who in the eyes of youth was then passé. Once, at a lecture by Marinetti, the impresario of Italian Futurism, Nadelman suddenly jumped upon the platform and shouted: "If Signor Marinetti says he will demolish the art of the past he simply shows that he does not understand the art of the past!" A fist-fight followed, which ended only when one of Marinetti's supporters knocked Nadelman off the platform into a group of screaming women.

The outbreak of the First World War ended one phase of Nadelman's life. He was then thirty-two. But for the war he would have continued to live in Paris, where he was becoming so much talked about that once Matisse angrily put up a sign in the school where he taught painting: *"Défense de parler de Nadelman ici."* And he might have gone on for a time winning easy triumphs, pampered by art lovers and *"couronné de roses,"* as the poet Apollinaire described him. But it may be doubted whether he would have held out against modernism forever. Perhaps, had he remained in Paris, his development would have been accelerated and he would have either changed his approach radically or else given up the practice of his art earlier—say in 1917 rather than 1934 or 1935.

The war caught Nadelman in Belgium. Still a Russian subject, he went to the Czar's consulate in Brussels to volunteer as a reservist with the Russian Army. But it was impossible for him to get back to Russia, with the German Army already overrunning part of Belgium. The only way out was through England. But when he reached that country he gave up his ideas of returning to Russia and instead embarked for New York in October 1914.

NADELMAN arrived in New York carrying with him most of the unsold work that he had done in Paris. His reception was at first rather chilly, despite a growing international reputation already marked by exhibitions in Barcelona, London, Berlin, and in New York's famous Armory Show of 1913. John Weichsel, in the article mentioned above, wrote: "While dithyrambic outpourings were greeting pig-tailed mediocrities, to this really great and original talent's share fell a complete obscurity." But this obscurity did not last long. In December 1915 Nadelman had his first American one-man show at Alfred Stieglitz's Photo-Secession Gallery "291," and this was followed by several other highly successful shows in the next few years. His graceful sculpture, with its reminiscences of classical antiquity, was easier to appreciate than the products of Cubism, Expressionism, abstract art, and the other modern movements, and soon it was eagerly bought. Portrait commissions swamped him and the result was some fifty delightful if not very important busts.

Yet it was not all smooth sailing. The American art public at that time reacted with hostility toward even the slightest innovations, and it was not to change its attitude for decades, as we can see from the isolation in which our more advanced artists continued to work during the 20's and 30's. Nadelman's "new line"—the one he developed in America—was not by any means revolutionary. He carved and modeled people as his sharp eyes saw them on the street and in salons, with all their smugness and vanity. He would simplify the forms he took from nature, concentrating on rhythm and the expression of a single idea; thus he produced such charming little pieces, mostly in painted wood, as "Tango," "Woman at the Piano," and "The Orchestra Conductor." These sculptures voice the artist's amusement at the social scene, not his feelings of social protest. Their satire is not passionate like Daumier's; it is witty but not profound, and the art that conveys it embodies no significant discoveries in the realm of form. Yet in 1917, when a group of society women, together with some conservative sculptresses, arranged a benefit exhibition for the warring countries aligned against Germany called "Allies of Sculpture," Nadelman's contributions provoked a protest from the sponsors. Was it because his satire was too close to home—as in his ironical figure of a society lady called "Femme Assise"? One would doubt this. The artist himself probably guessed more correctly when he assumed that the conservative ladies objected to the unprecedented portrayal in sculpture of women in modern dress. "When I represent women wearing clothes—the correct fashionable gowns and things, and men with regular human hats—well, a great many people, not being accustomed to this sort of thing, want to know whether this is art or insolence."

As late as 1925, the Chicago *Tribune*, reviewing a Nadelman show at the Chicago Art Institute, protested that Nadelman's works seemed "to have been made principally to puzzle the public and to catch the public eye. As humor they are, perhaps, successful, but they cannot be considered as serious art or as aiming at nobility or power." One may wonder as to the reviewer's premises and as to what he considered nobility and power, but his remarks contain a germ of truth.

The "Allies of Sculpture" incident enhanced Nadelman's reputation rather than hurt it. And perhaps it helped to accomplish his transformation from a Left Bank into a "high" bohemian, a dandy and social lion who participated in the life of New York's smart set and designed floats for the annual Beaux Arts balls. His commercial success was such that he was to employ several assistants. In 1919 he married Viola Flannery, the wealthy widow of a prominent New York lawyer by whom she had had two daughters. She herself was the stepdaughter of an Italian count. The Nadelmans bought Alderbrook, a large estate in Riverdale, and took to spending much time there, in a spacious old house with many gables, vine-covered verandas and recesses, and a superb view of the Hudson. They also traveled a good deal and collected American folk art: embroideries, carvings, articles of handicraft, Pennsylvania Dutch ceramics, and so forth. In the end they built the most comprehensive collection of this kind of art in the world.

The depression wiped out most of the Nadelmans' fortune and marked the beginning of the third and perhaps saddest chapter of the artist's life. They dispersed their collection by selling it in parcels to the New York Historical Society, Colonial Williamsburg, and other institutions and collectors. (Some of the finest pieces of forged iron at the Cloisters in New York City come from Alderbrook.) Nadelman himself gradually disappeared from the public eye. During the early 30's he still executed some large architectural commissions—among them the clay model for the overdoor of the Fuller Building at 57th Street and Madison Avenue. His last important portrait was of the late Senator Carter Glass of Virginia, which he did in 1933. Between 1932, when Helena Rubinstein exhibited some of Nadelman's early work, and his death on December 28, 1946, his name hardly appeared anywhere in the press.

HAD he completely retired from the practice of his art, like the composer Rossini, who in his old age rarely wrote any music and sought distraction elsewhere? Alderbrook is only a dozen miles from the center of New York, but Nadelman's trips downtown, to the Public Library or the Metropolitan Museum, came to be few and far between. Occasionally, however, he would appear at the Knickerbocker Whist Club or the Cavendish Club, where he would join Ely Culbertson for an afternoon of talk and bridge. And he still retained his interest in pretty women and liked to walk on Fifth Avenue and admire the smartly dressed ladies. Even in his sixties he was still so handsome and dressed so impeccably that women would turn their heads to look at him.

During the last decade or so of his life he lived seemingly like a retired country squire. When friends, visiting him, asked him what he was doing, he would point proudly to the raspberry bushes he had planted. His neighbors knew him as an old gentleman fond of a quiet game of bridge. When I went up to Riverdale last December, the people whom I asked for directions to the home of "the late Elie Nadelman, the sculptor," knew the name and the place but appeared to be astonished to learn that the late squire of Alderbrook had been an artist.

Had he really abandoned his art in the last years of his life? Was his volunteer work in occupational therapy at the Bronx Veterans Hospital—to which he contributed a kiln and other supplies—the only active connection he maintained with the practice of sculpture? This was the general opinion at the time of Nadelman's death, but Lincoln Kirstein, visiting Alderbrook a short time after, discovered that the world had been mistaken. For years the aging man had been busy developing, almost in secret, what he himself may have considered to be a new form of sculpture. Stacked on the shelves of his studio Mr. Kirstein found hundreds—they may be thousands—of little clay and plaster figures executed by Nadelman in the 30's and 40's. These were the result of a kind of mass production allegedly designed to furnish the homes of people of limited means with original works of art. (Van Gogh, too, had once thought of mass-producing pictures to embellish the dreary homes of the poor.) Most of the figures are about ten inches high, and they show occasional traces of Nadelman's old gift for satire, with its rhythm and verve. But on the whole they appear to be a wasted effort, little superior in quality to the knicknacks in gift shops or the commercialized peasant art of Central Europe.

There is something symbolic in the fact that many of these plump little clay or plaster figurines, somehow tragic in mood despite their archaic smiles, are unable to stand on their own feet. They reveal perhaps a frustration greater than the artist himself was aware of, and which he did not express when he complained of the failure of the New York museums to acquire his work and of the theft and distortion of his own original ideas. Had he, unconsciously, tried to appeal to popular taste over the heads of the connoisseurs and critics who had come to reject him as academic and old-fashioned? Had he tried to reconquer the lost province of art by multiplying his efforts? We who fail to see the high virtues of these little dolls are tempted to regard them each as a tear wept by the artist over his art.

NADELMAN'S world died with the invasion of Belgium in 1914, or at the latest with the 1929 crash. It was almost as if to emphasize this that in the mid-30's, when economic necessity forced him to give up the studio he had used until then, which was in a house separated from Alderbrook, the workmen who removed its contents accidentally broke or damaged a good many molds and figures, and put the rest topsy-turvy into the cellar. Nor was it modesty or pride that moved the artist to refuse two invitations to participate in group shows during the last years of his life. Artists often know instinctively whether or not they are failures, regardless of the world's comment or their own gestures of self-confidence.

At this distance it is a little painful to read the bold words Nadelman wrote in the preface to a book of his drawings, *Vers la beauté plastique,* which appeared in 1921: "These drawings, made sixteen years ago, have completely revolutionized the art of our time. They introduced into painting and sculpture *abstract form,* until then wholly lacking. Cubism was only an imitation of the abstract forms of these drawings and did not attain their plastic significance. Their influence will continue and will be felt more profoundly in the art of the future." (These words are quoted in Lincoln Kirstein's *Elie Nadelman Drawings,* H. Bittner, 1949, 52 pp., 58 pl. $6.50, as well as the aforementioned catalogue *The Sculpture of Nadelman.*)

But the future, I am afraid, will remember Nadelman as an artist who may have foreseen a partial aspect of abstract art but never grasped, and never wished to grasp, its structure and substance—in other words, an essentially academic artist of great talent, but academic nevertheless, and at best modern only by accident. The fervor with which his admirers defend him today already begins to have a pathos about it. Thus does Mr. Kirstein reply to those who consider Nadelman's marble heads as little more than academic feats of talent: "The white marble heads distress people today, since they are smooth, symmetrical, harmonious and complete. To eyes nourished on the accidental distortion and battered surface of Expressionism, they are cloying."

Cloying might be the right word. Henry McBride, the dean of American art critics, wrote in the *Sun* as early as 1917 what seems part of the definitive verdict on Nadelman's art: "It is, in a word, refined. It is the highest degree of before-the-war art. It is culture to the breaking-point. . . . It seems to breathe out all the rare essences that were brought by the wise men from all the corners of the earth to be fused by the Parisians."

Parfumé may also be the right word. Next to the elegant sculpture of the elegant Nadelman, Lipchitz, Epstein, Picasso, and their works look like gross monsters. But they are monsters with force and endurance, whose vitality changed the face of art. They remain. Nadelman's fragrance may be blown away by the next wind. Or by the wind after the next.

THE TRAGIC FARCE OF DENAZIFICATION

Two Glimpses of the German Moral Climate

Two Ladies of the Regime

ALFRED POLGAR

THE scene is a middle-sized room with two windows. The court sits behind tables piled with books and papers. There are several rows of chairs occupied by reporters and the general public. Photographers move quickly around the room with their cameras, despite the great press of people. Both windows are closed. An iron coal stove gives off an intense heat. The whole room drips with perspiration.

In an armchair in front of the judge's table sits the chief personage in the drama: Dr. med. Mathilde Frieda Karoline Ludendorff, widow of Erich Ludendorff, the defeated Commander-in-Chief of the German armies in the First World War. Here, before one of the so-called *Spruchkammer*—the "denazification courts" – Frau Ludendorff, philosopher and scholar, must defend herself against the charge of having materially contributed to the National Socialist program and the barbarization and brutalization of her compatriots.

Place: Munich.

Time: The Present.

The accused is seventy-two years old, correspondingly gray-haired, and wears eyeglasses. Physiognomically, there is nothing noteworthy about her. Even a scrutiny prompted by malice fails to discover a single distinctive quality in this utterly neutral face. With Mathilde Ludendorff's identification photograph in her possession, not a woman of her age in all Germany but could go about with impunity. There is little of the military about the general's wife, except perhaps her broad-brimmed black hat, something like a cloth helmet.

The president of the court, when he speaks of the accused, uses the very impersonal and strangely noncommittal expression *"die Betroffene"*—"the party concerned." Of the dismay and confusion otherwise signified by this German word Frau Ludendorff never for a moment shows a trace. Wrapped in the impenetrable confusion of her doctrines and "discoveries," she is proof against all objection. An untiring speaker, her voice never flags through the hour-long harangues she delivers (the same cannot be said of the audience's attention). From time to time—when her subject is herself—there is a tremolo of emotion in it; otherwise the voice is unruffled, dispassionate, and uninhibited by the series of absurdities it is called upon to enunciate. She employs the vocabulary of an educated person, but her manner of speaking is of that oracular kind favored by the fortune-tellers of the Rummelplatz. You notice that Frau Ludendorff is accustomed to listeners not given to discriminating between sense and nonsense, and disposed from the start to accept such mental pabulum as she has to offer. This same pabulum, systematically dispensed by the Nazis, proved signally successful in the experiment of transforming men into beasts.

Among the doctrines which Frau Ludendorff, that seeker after God and the truth, preached to her people (and in part discoursed on before the Munich *Spruchkammer*) were the following: The Jewish bankers of America supported Hitler with hundreds of millions of dollars, so that he might come to power and destroy France, to the advantage of their satanic financial schemes. The Jews are guilty of the deaths

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SOME of the atmosphere of the "German problem"—heavy with guilt, suspicion, smouldering resentments, and personal tragedy—is captured in these two brief glimpses: ALFRED POLGAR'S sketch of two court trials he witnessed recently in Munich, and F. S. GROSSHUT'S report on the events that led up to the suicide of Klaus Mann last year. Mr. Polgar, the distinguished German short story writer and critic, was born in Vienna but is now an American citizen. Mr. Grosshut, who has written criticism for many periodicals throughout the world, emigrated from Germany to Palestine in 1933 and came to the United States last year. His permanent residence is in Haifa. Both these articles were translated from the German by Martin Greenberg.

of Luther, Lessing, Mozart, and Schiller. The Jews taught the German students to be drunkards, so as to sap the strength and vitality of German youth; and the monasteries lent a hand in this plot by the establishment of their distilleries and breweries.

Frau Ludendorff did not, however, have these subjects all to herself; her legal counsel, too, were not without originality, one of them declaring before the *Spruchkammer:* "We know today that the outbreak of the World War in 1914 had already been decided upon at a congress of Jews and Freemasons in 1889; for the year 1914, because of its cabalistic numerical value, was particularly favorable for the establishment of the world hegemony of international Jewry."

THERE are many who think Frau Ludendorff believes what she says and writes, and who therefore infer the presence of soft spots in her brain. Others again think the lady a completely malignant creature possessed by a hatred and a greed for importance that stimulate her inventive faculties. Something halfway between the two opinions is probably the correct one. Be that as it may, after World War I, Mathilde Ludendorff's book *Vom heiligen Quell deutscher Kraft* ("The Sacred Source of German Strength")—in ten volumes!—sold eighty thousand copies; only the paper shortage kept this figure from going higher, and the number of adherents to her "populist idea" was and probably is in the several hundred thousands. All these good German folk, having swallowed the mixture of slops and poison that Frau Ludendorff brewed, found themselves to be of one mind—the right frame of mind for perpetrating, or assisting in the perpetration of, or at least lending their hearty approval to, those now infamous deeds which have made the German name a stink in the nostrils of God and man.

DURING the few hours I spent as spectator at the Ludendorff proceedings, I was unable to shake off a feeling of oppression only partly to be explained by the infernally overheated stove. Later, however, outside in the cool dry air of the beneficent autumn, I hit upon the reason for my oppression. It was a *witchcraft trial* I had been witnessing in that small Munich room—a witchcraft trial in which accused and accuser had exchanged something of their roles. Here it was the magistrates who were ignorant of the devil's existence, while the accused persevered in affirming his existence and claimed initiation into his sinister mysteries. Here it was the court that knew nothing of the hellish arts the devil practices against Christian bodies and souls, whereas the accused knew them as intimately as pious people know their catechism. Here it was the accused who proved to doubting judges her intercourse—though of a hostile kind—with demons and evil spirits, which appeared to her in the guise of "cosmopolitan powers."

It smelt of inquisition and burning at the stake. Though the inquisitor, indeed—it was doubtless an oversight merely—sat not in the judge's chair but in the chair of the accused. And the time was: 1949. Do witches still ride their broomsticks today?

Mathilde Ludendorff was sentenced on January 5, 1950 to two years of "special labor" and confiscation of her property. She continues to edit her magazine, *Der Quell,* published in Stuttgart, the instrument for carrying on her work of education and philosophy.

ON THE same day, another trial was taking place in Munich, this time in a real courtroom. Frau Leni Riefenstahl, cinematic mainstay of the Third Reich, with which she had linked her fortunes for better (if not, however, for worse), feeling her reputation damaged by a newspaper article, had gone to court in quest of legal redress. The cheerful atmosphere prevailing here was a pleasant contrast to the spectral gloom of the other trial.

When I came in, the question was being debated whether, as the newspaper article had claimed, Leni Riefenstahl had herself picked out the gypsy concentration camp prisoners who had been forced to serve as extras in her film *Tiefland* ("Lowlands"), or whether someone else had done it for her. Opinions were divided. No one, however, disputed the fact that these same gypsy extras, women and children among them, not long after having contributed their bit to the cinematic career of Leni Riefenstahl, were shipped off to the gas chambers. The mention of this detail—it was, to be sure, beside the point so far as the legal suit was concerned—did not disturb the pleasant atmosphere of the trial. The idea of concentration camp prisoners working as movie extras was after all not without its amusing side. Witnesses with faulty memories made statements that led to many a comical exchange, evoking smiles from the entire courtroom, and from Leni Riefenstahl as well. When she smiled, her birdlike profile lost something of its sharpness. Yet even during these livelier moments, her mien did not lose its coldness. She had at one time made various films laid in settings of snow and ice. Perhaps this may account for the frostiness still present in her face.

Then there was a discussion of the four and a half million marks that had been spent in making *Tiefland*. Some of the things said on this point caused Frau Riefenstahl momentarily to adopt a defiant attitude. But really, she had no cause to pout; everybody was charming to her, even her adversary, even the judge. The entire courtroom listened with sympathy to her story of how only the Fuehrer's interest in her had protected her from the intrigues of Goebbels. For the Fuehrer had set great store by Leni Riefenstahl, and Leni Riefenstahl had set great store by the Fuehrer. She saw a good deal of Hitler (so one gathered from what she said)—he needed her talents, and he was always there when she needed him. When she pronounced Hitler's name—she spoke it often—it was as if something sweet were melting on her tongue.

For Goebbels, she had only bitterness. He had turned a cold shoulder to her. Incomprehensibly, he hadn't been the least bit friendly. Why should this have been? Why should she, among all the lovely ladies in his moving-picture preserve, have been singled out for his disfavor? If she knew, she did not say.

The trial ended with the sentencing of the defendant journalist, Dr. Kindler, to a fine of six hundred marks. On two of the many points he had made in his article, he was unable to offer any clear proof.

Nobody need feel any anxiety about Leni Riefenstahl's future. Her pockets—so she said in court—were full of contracts with foreign producers. With Argentinian producers, for example. And with Spanish producers. The aura of the Germany of yesterday surrounds her and assures her of sympathy, employment, respect, and success in the Germany of today. Her excellent relations with the Nazis assure her just such excellent relations with their successors. It is made all the simpler by the fact that so many of the successors are identical with their predecessors, having surrendered their positions only to make way for themselves.

No one laughed when the complainant's lawyer in the suit against Dr. Kindler cried out: "Our country can be proud of Leni Riefenstahl!"

Death of a Writer

F. S. Grosshut

KLAUS MANN died on May 22, 1949 of an overdose of sleeping tablets. *"Leiden um Deutschland"* —that was Klaus Mann's tragedy. The moral and cultural death of Germany was his death.

In exile, Klaus Mann had been among the most uncompromising and untiring fighters against the tyranny of the Third Reich. In lectures and essays, with inexhaustible energy, he called the attention of the world to the international threat represented by the Nazi regime. He edited the courageous periodical *Die Sammlung*, and wrote two important novels, *Symphonie Pathétique* and *Vulkan*. A third novel, *Das vergitterte Fenster* ("The Barred Window"), dissected the diseased body of National Socialism through the parallels between the Hitler regime and the reign of the mad king Ludwig of Bavaria (1825-1848). In still another book he analyzed André Gide's writings. During the war he served with the American Army as a soldier-correspondent.

After the collapse of the Nazi regime, he hoped for a spiritual and cultural regeneration of his homeland. But he returned to America from a postwar visit to Germany deeply disillusioned: nothing had changed in Germany. The hopes he had cherished during the years of exile were cruelly contradicted by the facts, and day by day the facts seemed to get worse.

Then there followed the attacks on his father, Thomas Mann, by the exponents of the so-called "inner emigration," who accused Thomas Mann of "deserting" his country. In June 1947 Thomas Mann answered his accusers roundly, quoting from the pages of his journal, *Leiden um Deutschland,* the moving passages that revealed his "profound horror" of the Germany of the Third Reich, and his "steadfast conviction that such a regime could only bring bloody ruin upon the nation"—as well as the deep compassion he had earlier felt for the German people, "that so much faith, enthusiasm, and proud hope should be thrown away on things so evidently macabre and depraved."

Twice, already, the faith and vital aspirations of the younger generation of German writers had broken down: first in the disorder and depression of the Weimar Republic, and a second time in 1933. For Klaus Mann, the third breakdown that came after 1945 proved too much. Despair took possession of him. He made several attempts on his own life.

FOR a last time, however, he set to work. He began work on a novel that was to express his deep despair and thus, he may have hoped, would help him to overcome it. To complete this novel, he went to Cannes, and while there he entered into negotiations with a German publisher for the publication of an earlier novel, *Mephisto,* which had appeared outside of Germany in 1936.

Mephisto told the story of a brilliant and dangerously virtuoso actor who in 1933, betraying his integrity as an artist, went over to Hitler. It is easily discernible to those at all acquainted with German theatrical circles that the story is based largely on the career of the German actor and director Gustav Gruendgens, who early in 1934 became director of the Prussian Staatstheater. (Gruendgens' predecessor in this post was the Nazi poet Hanns Johst, who as president of Hitler's Academy of Literature immortalized himself with the dictum: "When I hear the word 'culture,' I reach for my gun.")

It must have seemed to Klaus Mann that 1949 was an opportune time for the publication in Germany of this novel about the betrayal of German culture. It was the year of the Goethe Bicentennial, and all over Germany there were celebrations to observe the anniversary of the birth of the father of German culture. Germany East and West united to award Thomas Mann the Goethe Prize. Performances of *Faust* were arranged in many cities. Goethe had once said that for him there were only two important things: culture and barbarism. Klaus Mann's *Mephisto,* in its way, was saying the same thing. Perhaps the reception of *Mephisto* in Germany would tell something of whether the Goethe celebrations were more than window-dressing.

The contract was closed with the publisher and nothing, apparently, stood in the way of the book's appearance.

MEPHISTO did appear, but not Klaus Mann's *Mephisto.*

Among the various performances of *Faust* that were projected, one of the most important was to be given in Edinburgh, Scotland, whose cultural festivals enjoy such renown on the Continent. To play the role of Mephistopheles in the Edinburgh production of *Faust* was a mark of the highest distinction. It was, so to speak, the Goethe Prize of the stage.

The man invited to play the part of Mephistopheles was: Gustav Gruendgens, actor, director, and Intendant of the National Socialist theater, Staatsrat of the Third Reich, and the man whose moral betrayal of German culture formed the subject of Klaus Mann's novel.

Gruendgens, of course, had passed safely through the "denazification" courts—but the whole world knows what this "denazification" amounts to.

For actors, who practice their art in the public eye, there had been, if anything, an added obligation to separate themselves from the barbarism of the Third Reich. Far better artists than Gruendgens had gone into exile or imposed silence upon themselves. But Gruendgens stayed in Germany, acted in and directed plays, accepted the honorary title of Staatsrat at the hands of the Nazis, and frequented the circles close to the Nazi leadership. Indeed, he became the protégé of Goering himself. In a theatrical almanac published in 1948 (!), he had said that the "decisive years" for him had been "the period from 1933 to 1945." It was this man who had been singled out for the honor of an invitation to the Edinburgh Festival.

Many English actors refused to appear on the same stage with Gruendgens. But Gruendgens and the Duesseldorf theatrical troupe were nevertheless engaged and the performance took place—almost on the anniversary of the day on which Gruendgens' protector, Goering, had first let loose his bombs on London.

IN ALL this, the publisher who had contracted to bring out Klaus Mann's *Mephisto* found cause for reflection. He had known that Gruendgens was highly regarded in West Germany. In Munich this former director of the National Socialist theater had even been permitted to put on the opera *Banditen* by the Jewish composer Jacques Offenbach. And now, at the Goethe Festival in Edinburgh, the crowning touch had been added to the process of Gruendgens' "rehabilitation." On May 5, 1949, the publisher wrote to Klaus Mann:

Dear Herr Mann:

I am very much obliged to you for your letter of April 21. In the middle of October, already, political developments obliged me to move from Berlin to Bavaria. Here, however, it would not be wise to start up with the *Mephisto,* for Herr Gruendgens is already a person of some consequence in this area—you must surely have seen the announcements that have been appearing in the press? In Berlin it would have been easier to undertake such an operation, but here in the West it is not a simple matter.

With best regards,
Georg Jacobi
Verlag der Langenscheidt
Sprachwerke

On May 12, Klaus Mann sent this answer from Cannes:

Dear Herr Jacobi:

Your letter of May 5 is priceless. The publication of a novel you now call "undertaking an operation." Such an "operation" — you think — would be in the case of *Mephisto* "not at all a simple matter"—*ergo,* it must be dropped at once. Why? Because "Herr Gruendgens is already a person of some consequence in this area."

I call that logic! And civil courage! And the faithful keeping of a contract!—I don't know what astounds me more: the abjectness of your reasons, or the naivety with which you confess them. Gruendgens is a success —why then should you bring out a book that might seem to be aimed at him? Above all, no risks! Always throw in with the winning side! Swim with the current!

We know very well what all this leads to: to those very concentration camps of which afterwards one prefers to have known nothing. . . .

Will you be good enough to send the copy of *Mephisto* (a rarity!) now in your possession to the above address, by return mail.

Please do not address any further communications to me.

Respectfully,
Klaus Mann

JACOBI had written on May 5, and on May 12 Klaus Mann answered him. In between fell May 10, the anniversary of the Nazi burning of the books.

On May 21, Klaus Mann poisoned himself, and on May 22 he died.

Thomas Mann, who was in Stockholm on his European trip when the news of his son's death reached him, displayed during his Goethe address a Roman fortitude. His son was a victim of this time of crisis, he said, with characteristic restraint.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

I CASH CLOTHES!

Portrait of an Old-Clothes Man

DONALD PANETH

THE shops of New York City's second-hand clothing dealers crowd the bottom of Elizabeth Street on the rim of Manhattan's Lower East Side, in the block below Canal Street. The block is quiet, despite the insistent echo of heavy trucks rumbling noisily across Canal Street's uneven cobblestones; the Fifth Precinct, which polices the Bowery and Chinatown, is near the corner; the small shops nestle in low, ancient brick buildings, and their proprietors buy frayed suits, coats, and trousers from old-clothes peddlers and sell them to mid-West and Southern outlets. The peddlers are as shabby as the clothing they bear. They are old men, Jewish immigrants from Russia and Poland, who have shuffled through the city, clutching wrapped newspapers, crying, "I buy! Cash clothes!" for thirty, forty, fifty years. The peddlers are poorly dressed, and many need a shave. They are poor men.

HENRY GETOFF is an old-clothes peddler. He canvasses neighborhoods—Washington Heights, West End Avenue, Jackson Heights, the Grand Concourse—for old clothes, calling, "Buy cash! Buy!" He carries a tightly folded newspaper ("This is the sign I buy," he says) and brown wrapping paper for his purchases. It isn't an easy business. He works in all weathers, is unable to take a vacation, is constantly liable to arrest for making unnecessary noise, and his earnings are unpredictable. "It is a lot of walking," he says. "And nothing extra in money. Just enough to get along."

In the neighborhoods, housewives know him. When they hear his familiar cry, and they have clothes to sell, they lean from apartment windows and call, "Hey, mister!" From them, Getoff buys a vest for a quarter which he resells for fifty cents, a suit for one dollar which he resells for two-fifty, a topcoat for three dollars which he resells for five. He buys only men's clothing, women's styles shift too quickly. Before he buys, he carefully examines each garment for torn linings, moth holes, cigarette burns, and damaged collars. "Makes no difference if it's old and dirty," he says. "But it must be in good condition. Those that aren't we call wrecks. Junk peddlers buy *them.*" Near mid-afternoon each day, Getoff leaves for the market, the crowded row of shops on Elizabeth Street, where he deals amiably and rapidly with two dealers, whom he knows particularly well. On a good day, he sells them twenty-five dollars worth of clothing. "The dealers know me," he says. "And I know the dealers. We know what everything's worth. We don't try to fool each other."

Getoff, a short, stocky man, sixty-two years old, differs in appearance from most peddlers. His clothes are clean, he doesn't need a shave, and his face is unlined. His hair is gray though and closely cropped, his mustache is small and fuzzy, his eyes are alert and in-

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THE clothes peddler remains a familiar sight to big-city housewives; DONALD PANETH here tells the story of Henry Getoff, a member of this ancient and honorable Jewish profession. Mr. Paneth was born in New York City in 1927, and studied at the City College and Columbia University. He was for several years a reporter on the New York *Times,* and is at present completing a book about the New York scene.

telligent. He speaks English hesitantly, but capably. He has been an old-clothes peddler thirty-seven years.

He is a businessman without office, inventory, or records. He has a neat card with his name, address, and phone number, his hours of business are 9 AM to 4 PM with special evening appointments. He has many regular customers. "I have customers twenty-five years," he says. "I never lose a customer—unless I don't like him. I buy from the people in a nice way. I always try to satisfy them, and if they forget something in the pocket, I return it. In business, big or small, you have to be honest." Getoff emphasizes that he is his own boss. That is important to him. When he arrived with his wife in the United States from Russia in 1913, he was employed for a week as a clerk in a grocery store. A religious man, he prepared to leave the store for synagogue early Friday evening. The shopkeeper said to him, "What's the matter with you, Getoff? Are you a greenhorn? In America, you don't stop work for synagogue." He quit the job abruptly, and since then has been self-employed.

EACH weekday morning, Getoff leaves his Bronx home on Fulton Avenue, opposite Crotona Park, and selects a neighborhood to canvass; depending on his impulse it may be in the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and even Long Island or New Jersey. He walks slowly through the neighborhood, along avenues and down side streets, backtracking too, for five or six hours. "I like to walk," he says. "I like the fresh air." As he walks, he swings his wrapped newspaper, scans apartment windows for customers, and calls, "I buy! Cash clothes!" Or, "Buy cash! Buy!" All old-clothes peddlers carry a newspaper as a trade mark. "Apartment houses are very high," he explains. "A customer may not hear the call, but she will see the paper. So she knows the old-clothes man." In every neighborhood, Getoff is friendly with a shoemaker, a tailor, or a druggist, with whom he can leave his package of clothes, as it becomes too heavy for him to carry easily. "Some peddlers must walk with the package," he says. "They are not acquainted with all the people as I am." Two or three times a day, he calls his wife at home for phone messages she may have received for him. "I call her from the road," he says, "like a doctor calls his nurse."

In his quest for customers, Getoff is confronted with three business hazards: the weather, the police, and the holdup. Rain and snow are bad for business. "That's what you call the miserable days," he says. "Housewives don't like to call the man from the street. She has a nice carpet, or little children who might catch cold." In the past ten years, Getoff has been arrested five or six times for making unnecessary noise, but he has always been able to pay the one dollar or two dollars fine, and so has never passed a night in jail. Once, a policeman on Washington Heights gave him a summons for hollering before 9 AM, and when he appeared in court, he pleaded guilty, but with an explanation. "Your honor," he said, "I leave my house at nine, and I take two trolleys to the Heights. It takes me half an hour, maybe three-quarters. I could be on the Heights at nine?" The judge dismissed the case. The holdup is actually the least of the perils, but Getoff fears it the most. He has never been robbed, but he knows several peddlers who have been beaten for their money, a few dollars. So whenever he receives an evening call from someone he doesn't know, he asks his youngest son, Louis, to call and check and make certain the offer to sell is legitimate.

GETOFF scrawls the last name and address of reliable and productive customers in a battered vest-pocket notebook. His customers are mostly businessmen—"Working people don't sell old clothes," he says—and he has known many of them twenty or thirty years. "One customer by the name Sobel lives on the Concourse," he says. "Very nice people. He's manager in a big concern. It must be a nice salary: they live nice and educate their children nice. Another customer lives in a hotel on West End Avenue. He's a rich man, a manufacturer of men's suits. I buy from his daughter too. One woman in Yonkers I know thirty-five years. She treats me like a brother. When I come, it's 'How are you, Getoff? Take your coat off. Sit down.' She recommends me to many people."

Although he is obliging, he often has small difficulties with his customers. They may recommend him to a sister or cousin whom he may dislike, but to whom he must be as pleasant as possible: he cannot offend a good customer's relative; or a woman will bargain relentlessly with him, demanding a price he cannot pay. He has a formula for coping with her. The clothes she offers may be worth twenty dollars, but she asks fifty dollars, and since she would simply shrug if he offered the true value, he proposes thirty-five dollars. "Go on! Go on!" she yells. "Take a walk!" A week later, Getoff calls back, and she remembers him: she has already spoken to three more peddlers, who refused to buy, and perhaps quarreled with her, and she is willing to lower her demands. "All right," she says. "I'll take thirty-five dollars." But, now prices are off, the market is down, and Getoff says twenty dollars—which she accepts reluctantly.

When he refers to his customers, whom he likes to observe and analyze, Getoff customarily divides them into two groups: woman and *woman*, man and *man*, rich people and *rich* people, boy and *boy*. "Old people from the other side who have money think they're somebody because they're rich," he says. "They look down on you. They show they don't like to deal with a peddler. Then, there are *rich* people with education. They give me a chair and on a hot day a cold drink. They have feeling. They have consideration. A boy is twenty years old. He talks to me nice, he doesn't get excited. A *boy* is thirty-five. Maybe, he's not so bad, but he gets excited. This is in him already. He's an old bachelor, and he's got too much on his mind—why he didn't marry. Probably he's disappointed."

GETOFF leaves the neighborhood with his package for the market about 2 PM. At five and nine Elizabeth Street, the peddlers have lockers in which they keep the clothes they are unable to sell immediately. Nine Elizabeth Street is a store with an unwashed window and two signs: "Restaurant—Home Cooking" and "Tailor—All Repairs." Inside, the store is long and narrow and dimly lit, the wooden floor is bare and dirty, a long, narrow counter for resting packages is at the right. Nearly one hundred lockers crowd the walls from floor to ceiling. They are deep, two feet by two feet, and rent for one dollar to three dollars a month; the lockers nearest the ceiling are the cheapest. The tailor and restaurant, with four tables and a perpetual pinochle game, are in back.

Peddlers crowd the store in the afternoon. Activity is intense with much movement and loud conversation in Yiddish and English. In a corner, one peddler offers another peddler a suit. "This is a good suit," he says. "Sharkskin." "I give you two dollars." "Two dollars? Ha! I take it home with me." "OK, two-fifty. Your own brother wouldn't give you more. Would I fool you?" "Listen, what the hell's the matter with you? If you want it, buy it—at a fair price. If you don't want it, I don't feel bad. I sell it." At a locker, a short, pudgy peddler sorts clothing as he comments hoarsely to his neighbor about a mutual acquaintance: "That guy is a crook. I know him. He's no good for nothing. He's crazy. Him with all his money. He works Saturday, he works Sunday, he works Yom Kippur. Big shot! He oughta be on Fifth Avenue. I don't talk to him no more. He can drop dead for me." Near the door, a tall, stooped, grumbling man, an alcoholic from the Bowery, a block away, attempts to sell a ragged garment to a peddler. "Look at that label," he says. "That alone's worth fifteen cents. I hate to tell you what I paid for this shirt originally. Eight dollars. Eight dollars. And now I can't get fifteen cents for it. But I could buy a suit or coat here cheap as hell. For fifty cents a suit that I could pawn for two dollars. I know. I've done it."

Getoff is friendly with most of the peddlers, and speaks to them while unwrapping his clothes, before going into the market; among them, the timeless question is, "What've you got?" This is what they talk about. "One peddler," Getoff says, "I used to go partners with, and split profits. He's mine age. He comes from Poland. I would have the money. He would have the customer. I appeal more to women than him. We're still friends."

The tight row of dealers' shops—the market—crowds the street outside Nine Elizabeth. "The market was here when I came," Getoff says. "And I know peddlers ninety years old, who have been here sixty-five years. They say the market was here when they came." Getoff sells his clothes to two dealers, who operate small, cluttered shops, where clothing is piled on high, huge shelves; in the fall and winter, he sells them winter suits, top coats, and shoes. (Summer is the slow season with little to buy and sell.) One of the dealers is sixty-five years old, he comes from Vilna; the other is fifty-eight, he comes from Kiev. "They're plain Yiddish men," Getoff says. "They have a nice family. Plenty of money. They deal nice." They remodel and clean and sell the clothes that they buy to retailers from Detroit, Cleveland, Des Moines, Dallas, Atlanta, Savannah, Birmingham, where they are sold eventually to farm and factory workers.

Henry Getoff, old-clothes peddler, was born on July 16, 1887 in Lubin, Russia, a small, hilly city of twenty thousand in the Ukraine. He was the son of Tuba, a religious, charitable, simple woman, and Louis Getoff, a friendly, unexcitable, goodnatured flour dealer. Getoff had two brothers, Zalman and Jacob, and three sisters, Fanny, Bella, and Ida; they lived in a stucco, three-room house on the edge of Lubin, near a small lake, where townswomen washed clothes and fetched water, and boys, like himself, fished and boated and swam. "It was quiet and pretty," Getoff says. He studied the Bible and Talmud at a small school in Lubin from his sixth to his twelfth year, and then looked for work. "In the little city there was nothing to do," he recalls. "I went to Kiev." From fourteen to twenty-one, he traveled about the Ukraine, from Kharkov to Odessa to Kiev. "I was in all kinds of business," he says. "Different business every year." In Kharkov, he sold flowers; in Odessa, he worked in a shoe factory and was a rope salesman; in Kiev, where he lived five years, he owned an appetizing store, which sold prunes, salmon, figs, dates, white fish.

"Kiev was wonderful," he says. "A clean, beautiful city with factories of all kinds. I felt nice in Kiev. It was something new and interesting. In a shop window on the widest boulevard was a solid gold lion—an advertisement. In all of Russia, I never saw such. Just in Kiev. Also, businessmen made a good living. Some Jews had permits to live there, but small people like me had a politician. I paid him one dollar a week for a certain paper." But life in Kiev was not entirely pleasant. In 1904, when he was seventeen, he was one of two hundred Jewish men and youths who fought a pogrom mob; a pistol bullet wounded him in the neck, and he was hospitalized three months. "Boys were men in the old country," he says. "Life learned us quickly. We supported ourselves. Not like in America, where a boy may be good in school, but nothing else."

When Getoff was twenty-one, he returned to Lubin and avoided conscription in the Czar's army through the intervention of a physician. "He was a family friend," Getoff explains. "And the head doctor for conscription. He did a favor, and overlooked me. He was an honest man. He took no money." Then, Getoff married Bessie Platkin, a young baker's daughter, whom he had known as a child. "Business in Russia was not good," he says. "It was bad for Jews. There were always pogroms, and you couldn't go to the university. Only rich Jews could live in Moscow or St. Petersburg. This makes me come to America." He and his wife sailed in 1913 from a Latvian seaport aboard an old German freighter, jammed with seventeen hundred immigrants; his sisters, who married, and his brothers, who went into business, remained in Russia, and he hasn't had a letter from them since 1938. The transatlantic voyage in rough seas took twenty-one days. "I will never forget how bad it was," he says. "We were all seasick terrible. Everyone was praying the ship shouldn't go down."

In New York, he stayed for two weeks with an uncle in the Bronx, on Third Avenue between 173rd and 174th Streets two blocks from where he now lives. He worked a week in a grocery, and meanwhile met an old-clothes peddler, who told him, "You're a young man; better to be in my business. It'll keep you out in the fresh air." "I didn't want to work in the garment shops," Getoff says. "The pay was too low. So I went in this business." He then attended night school for three weeks to study English. He enjoyed the school. "They teach the foreigners so good," he says. "They learn us to read, to talk, to everything. They explain the people very nice. I see it was a mistake—I should go at least a year in school. It would be better for me. But, I was a married man; my wife didn't like to be alone at night."

Getoff liked the United States too. "I was happy," he says. "The difference was day and night. Russia was miserable, but here children went to high school, Jews were doctors and lawyers, you could open a shop wherever you want. It appeals to me very good." He became a citizen in 1935. As a peddler, he learned quickly: he became acquainted with dealers' needs and prices and he slowly acquired customers about the city. He would stop people in the street, and ask them if they had any old clothes to sell; if they didn't he would give them his card with his address. He didn't have a telephone then; his customers sent him postcards. "When I was starting," he says, "I used four or five dealers. I didn't know the value of clothes, and when they gave me a price, I didn't know if it was right. My dream was that I should be a dealer, but I never could collect enough money to open a shop."

Though he needed business, Getoff never worked on Saturday, when he went to synagogue, or on Sunday, when he might be arrested for hollering on the Sabbath. He took his religion seriously, and regularly attended Friday evening and Saturday morning services. "I was religious when I was young and now I am the same thing," he says. "There is a God. I believe in it. God is whatever I see—rain and snow and earth and mountains. who could make it but God?" In 1917 he and ten friends formed the Congregation Sabbath Observers of the Bronx; today Getoff is vice-president of the congregation, which has sixty members, its own synagogue, and two small cemeteries in New Jersey.

In 1918 and 1924, his two sons, Hyman and Louis, were born. "My father was very giving," Louis says. "He didn't have much, but he never held back anything. When it snowed, he built snowmen with us in Crotona Park, and every night he played checkers with Hy, who usually lost. Pa was good at checkers." Getoff insisted his sons should be educated. Hy was graduated from City College and New York University's Law School; during the war, he served in army intelligence on New Guinea, and he is now an attorney in Los Angeles. Louis, who was an army sergeant in India, also attended City College; he is a clinical psychologist, studying for his doctorate at Columbia University.

GETOFF's wife, a short, stout, gregarious woman, recalls that the old-clothes business was never particularly lucrative. "It's a bad business for money," she says. "Sometimes, I'd yell at him: 'Henry, you are a dope. Why are you in such a business? It's lousy rotten.' Afterwards I would feel bad. He is a good man." Getoff earned the most money during the 20's when he sold sixty or seventy dollars' worth of clothing a day; now thirty dollars a day is excellent. "Now is worse than after the first war," he says. "China used to take fifteen million old hats a year. No more. Turkey, Russia, Bulgaria, Hungary used to take also. But no more." During the depression, people didn't sell old clothes, and Getoff was continually in debt to loan companies. "My father wouldn't consider relief," Louis says. "I tried to explain to him the obligation of the state. But he wouldn't listen." To simplify business, Getoff installed a telephone in 1934, and at first his wife wouldn't answer it when she was at home alone; "I was green," she says. "I was scared of it." In 1936, to stimulate business, he started to send postcards to families who published obituaries in the New York *Times*. He didn't like to collect clothing from bereaved wives and children, but it was a source; finally, the technique spread, and in 1942, when a woman in his apartment house, whose husband was killed in an automobile accident, received a dozen postcards from old-clothes peddlers, he decided to abandon it.

Thirteen years ago, he spurred another change, a permanent one, within his trade: he helped organize the Used Clothing Dealers Association, to which one hundred and fifty peddlers—all of those in the city—now belong. "We needed an association to benefit peddlers," he says. Members pay twenty-five cents a week dues and the association retains a lawyer, pays court fees, and lends needy or ill peddlers up to two hundred dollars. Getoff is a trustee and chairman of the loan fund, and twice a month on Thursday evening he attends a Board of Directors meeting at 151 Clinton Street. The board ordinarily considers routine business: a request for a loan, a proposal for a banquet, the collection of dues. But recently it faced a new and unexpected problem: the charity racket, in which an individual obtains a "permit" for five dollars from certain yeshivas, and rings doorbells for contributions of old clothing, which he pawns or sells. In January one hundred and fifty peddlers held a protest meeting. "Some yeshivas do not care," Getoff declared angrily at the meeting. "They have the five dollars." And a month ago, he met with several yeshiva rabbis, who said, "This is unbelievable," and assured him they would investigate.

In his trade, Getoff is known as "The Professor." Peddlers respect him as a leader and as the father of a lawyer and a doctor. He is serious, quiet, energetic, and assiduous. "He is a medium nature," his wife says. "Not bad, not good. He gets excited when I ask for more money. But he's not stingy—he doesn't have it. He is a good husband: he doesn't look on other womens, and he's kind. He doesn't play cards, but he likes his schnapps. He gets high on all the Jewish holidays." And although he is essentially quiet, he is expansive at parties, weddings, and dinners, where, with the provocation of schnapps, he may make a speech, dance, or sing a Hebrew song.

When he leaves the Elizabeth Street market at 4 PM each day, he takes the Third Avenue El home to the Bronx. "My trade is all right," he says. "I made a living. I raised my children. Now, young people are not becoming peddlers. This generation doesn't like it. Maybe the next will—if it doesn't, the trade dies." Getoff's five-room apartment, overlooking Crotona Park, is small and cluttered. "But, it's comfortable," he says. "A home. This is the best pleasure." He eats simple suppers, enjoying soup, meat or chicken, and potatoes most; he doesn't like dairy foods. In the evening, he rests. He has low blood pressure, but he refuses to see a doctor. "When it's my time to go, I'll go," he says. He reads the Jewish *Day* and *Morning Journal*, but he no longer reads Sholom Aleichem, Tolstoy, or Gorki; he sleeps instead. Nor does he walk after supper, as he used to, and on a warm, sunny Saturday or Sunday, he likes to sit quietly in the green park opposite his house. "I am not a lawyer or a doctor," he says. "When it is Friday already, I am tired."

RESTLESS AS A WOLF

MOSHE LEIB HALPERN

RESTLESS as a wolf, and restful as a bear,
The savage shouts in me, boredom lends an ear.
I am not what I think, I am not what I will.
I am the magician, and I am the magical.
I am a mystery that wearies its own bones,
Agile as the wind, and anchored to a stone.
I am the summer sun. I am the winter cold.
I am the rich fop who scatters coins of gold.
I am the tough who saunters, cap thrust on a side,
And, whistling, steals away his own precious time.
I am the violin, the flute, too, and the bass
Of three old musicians, playing in the market place.
I am the children's dance, and in the light of the moon,
I am the fool who longs for the far-off land of blue.
And when I pass by a tumbledown old house,
I am the desolation there that stares out.
Now am I the terror, without, before my door.
The open hole that's waiting for me on the moor.
Now am I a candlelight that burns memorial
Superfluous, a print on gray-dust-covered walls.
Now am I the heart—the sad look of woe
That has longed for me a hundred years ago.
Now am I the night that bids me to be done,
The heavy twilight mist, the quiet evening song.
The star overhead up on high, far, remote,
The rustle of a tree, a bell's peal, smoke. . . .

MOSHE LEIB HALPERN (1886-1932) was a Yiddish poet who lived and wrote in America. His poem "Your Life" appeared in the October 1949 COMMENTARY. The present poem was translated from the Yiddish by Jacob Sloan.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

MYTH IN JUDAISM

MARTIN BUBER

The following essay by Martin Buber, here translated into English for the first time, represents an early stage in the development of his thought. First published in German in 1913, it expresses Buber's enthusiasm for the mystical and Hasidic strains in Jewish history, and his hostility to the rabbinic element, which he tended to equate with rationalism.

When Buber granted permission for Commentary to publish this translation by Ralph Manheim, he asked that the article be prefaced by the following remarks: "When the editor of Commentary suggested that a translation of this essay be published, I re-read it for the first time in many years. (It was the fourth of my seven *Speeches on Judaism* and dates from 1913; my last reading of it was in preparation for the issuing of a collected edition of the *Speeches* in 1923.) Upon re-reading, I have the impression that it may be of some importance even today for those wanting to know about the spiritual history of Israel, and so I willingly agreed. But I should like to inform the reader that had I written the essay some years later, I would have made it clearer that real myth is the expression, not of an imaginative state of mind or of mere feeling, but of a real meeting of two Realities."—Ed.

THERE is perhaps no better way of clarifying our own sense of the myth, than to ask how Plato understood the meaning of this word. For Plato, myth consists in a record of divine events as a reality directly experienced through the senses. Accordingly, any attempt to describe divine happenings as a transcendant process, or as an experience of the soul, should not be called myth. A lecture on theology, even though it has evangelical simplicity and grandeur, a record of ecstatic visions, however impressive and convincing, both stand outside the sphere of myth proper.

So profound and deep-rooted is this ancient tradition, as to what myth is, that it is not hard to see how it came to be supposed that the power to create myths was peculiar to those peoples for whom the divine was an objective substance, capable of being seen, heard, and felt, and who consequently conceived of divine actions and sufferings as a series of purely material events. Some thinkers have gone farther and set up an opposition between the polytheistic peoples as myth-making, and the monotheistic peoples as non-myth-making. The Jewish people were numbered among the mythless peoples, and as such glorified or despised; glorified, if the appraiser looked upon the myth as an inferior stage, preliminary to religion; despised, if he looked upon myth as the summit of humanity, the natural and eternal metaphysic of the soul, and as such superior to all religions.

Such attempts—and some of them have gained wide influence—to reckon the value of a people rather than to understand the people, are always absurd and useless; most of all when they are based on an ignorance or distortion of historical reality. Ignorance and distortion are the main pillars of the modern attempt to understand the Jews through race psychology; the [German] race psychologist, for example, will discover a rationalistic or utilitarian trait in certain utterances or habits of official Judaism, and then claim to have demonstrated the essential superficial rationalism or utilitarianism of the Jews; he will not suspect or wish to suspect that such manifestations amount to no more than insignificant, if conspicuous, stoppages in the great but humble flow of ardent, devoted, disinterested Jewish popular religiosity. And the Jewish apologists, in turn, who direct their pitiful zeal to demonstrating that Judaism has no distinctive quality but is an expression of pure humanity, do the same thing in their way, being themselves imprisoned in the corruption of rationalism and utilitarianism.

Thus for a long time both sides—the racist, myth-admiring anti-Semite, and the Jewish nationalist apologist—have denied the existence of myths among the Jews. This was not difficult. Post-Biblical Jewish literature was long misunderstood. The Aggada was regarded as gratuitous fantasy, or as a collection of banal parables, the Midrash as barren and legalistic commentary, the Cabala as a senseless and grotesque juggling with numbers, Hasidism, where it was more than a mere name, was disparaged as pathological religious frenzy. And as for the Bible, even scholars of integrity could reasonably find it devoid of mythology; for it was put into its present form by a body of men inspired by the spirit of the official, late Jewish priesthood, who looked upon the inspiring source of all true religiosity, that is, upon myth, as the natural enemy of religion as they conceived it, and accordingly removed everything of a mythical nature from the abundance of written records that had come down to them.

Fortunately, the knowledge of this priesthood was limited, and certain elements of whose original character they were unaware, were allowed to slip through. And thus we find scattered through every book of the Bible veins of pure ore. Once they were uncovered by modern research, the existence of the Jewish myth could no longer be denied. But now its independence was questioned. Wherever a related mythical motif was found in another Near Eastern people, that was proclaimed as the original, the Jewish version as a copy; and where none was found, it was simply assumed that the original had been lost.

WE NEED not go into detail about these trivial endeavors (arising from the deep-rooted but hopeless desire of the modern European to cut loose his Christianity, which is indispensable to him, from its Jewish base); for the whole conception of history that makes these efforts possible (and it is far more important to understand this than to refute such theories one by one) is a monstrous blunder. It is entirely perverse and presumptuous to consider a phenomenon so vast as the mythology of a people from the miserably ephemeral standpoint of "originality." Where the spirit confronts us, what matters is not originality, but reality. The works of the spirit do not exist in order that we may analyze them and then examine the products of our analysis to see whether they occur here for the first time—this whole conception of "for the first time" can govern only a petty, near-sighted mind with no notion of how the human spirit, in its history, brings forth something eternally new from material eternally the same.

And such a reality is the mythology of the Jews, as we are able to reconstruct it, despite all Jewish and non-Jewish efforts to the contrary. Jewish mythology may have all manner of "motifs" in common with the mythologies of other peoples, and it will seldom be possible to tell for sure which of these merely passed from people to people—as happens in a process of give and take among *all* peoples, those who are allegedly "productive" and those who are said to be "receptive"—and which of them result from a past or present kinship between the Jews and other peoples: from kindred ways of experience and kindred ways of expressing experience, and also from kindred destinies. This, I say, we shall never fully know. But that is not what is essential for us late-comers; what is essential is the purity and grandeur of creative humanity, which casts all experience into the smelting furnace, as Cellini did with his household utensils, and creates an immortal figure.

Along with the Bible, post-Biblical literature has become the object of modern research, though not in the same degree. And although here, as in the Bible, elements hostile to the myth—legalistic rigorism and rabbinical dialectic—are evident, and although these elements restricted the expression of myth, nevertheless an abundance of mythical material has been discovered. What had been taken for arbitrary comment on Biblical passages turned out to be the living re-creation of an ancient popular heritage; legendary traditions which the theologians had endeavored to stifle in preparing the canon bloomed again in their pristine richness; holy secrets that had passed from mouth to mouth through the centuries, forever being rejuvenated, culminated in the great works of Jewish mysticism.

Rationalistic Jewish apologists could now, after the disclosure of the mythical elements in the post-Biblical literature, no longer sustain the fiction that there was no Jewish myth. Hence they tried a new tack: they now distinguished between a negative, mythological Judaism and a positive, monotheistic Judaism. They condemned the former as a barrier, a screen against the light, and upheld the latter as the true doctrine. They sanctioned the struggle of Rabbinism to destroy the myth, called it the progressive purification of the idea, and themselves joined in the struggle. David Neumark, an outstanding Jewish scholar affiliated with this trend, although he set himself higher aims than do the apologists, formulated this attitude as follows: "The history of the development of the Jewish religion is in truth the history of the struggles for liberation from Jewish and alien, old and new, mythology."

These words contain a truth, but obscure it by their partisanship. Let us attempt to clarify the truth by formulating the thought more fairly: "The history of the development of the Jewish religion is the history of the struggles between the natural mythical-monotheistic popular religion and the intellectual-monotheistic religion of the rabbis."

I have said: the mythical-monotheistic popular religion; for it is by no means true that monotheism and myth exclude one another, or that a people of monotheistic feeling must necessarily be lacking in the power to create myth. Any living monotheism is, on the contrary, replete with the mythical element, and only so long as this is so, can it truly be called living. It is true that Rabbinism, in its blind striving for the "fencing off" of Judaism, sought to create a monotheistic faith "purified" of myth; but what it created in this way was a wretched homunculus. And this homunculus became the Exilarch; he ruled over the generations of the Galuth; under his tyranny, the living force of the Jewish experience of God, i.e., the myth, was compelled to lock itself up in the tower of the Cabala, or take refuge close to the spinning wheels of women, or quit the ghetto for the outside world: it was tolerated only as esoteric doctrine, or despised as superstition, or condemned as heresy—until Hasidism placed it upon a short-lived throne, from which it was thrust down, to wander in the guise of a beggar through our melancholy dreams.

And yet it was to myth that Judaism owed its innermost strength in times of danger. It was not Josef Caro but Isaac Luria in the 16th century, not the Gaon of Vilna but the Baal Shem, who truly reinforced Judaism and built a hedge around it; for they raised up the popular religion to be a power in Israel and renewed the national personality via the roots of its myth. And if it is so hard for the emancipated Jews of our generation to fuse their human religiosity with their Judaism, it is the fault of Rabbinism, which emasculated the Jewish ideal. But if nevertheless the road to unity still stands open before us; if it remains possible that by reverencing the divine according to our individual feeling, we may still hear the wing-beats of the Jewish spirit, it is the sublime power of our myth that we have to thank for it.

IN ORDER to know the essence of the monotheistic Jewish myth, and thereby to achieve a profounder conception of myth as such, we must study the genesis of Jewish monotheism as it is revealed in the Bible. We then discover three stages of development that can be clearly differentiated. The first of these historical stages—which must not be confused with the different documentary sources as distinguished by modern Bible criticism—bears the name of *Elohim,* the second of *Yahweh,* the third bears both names in order to designate a divine being, who is in truth nameless, in his twofold manifestation as universal God and national God. Each of these three stages has its specific mythology; it is the three together that constitute the structure of the Jewish myth.

In the Bible the name *Elohim* usually occurs as a singular, but there is no doubt that it was originally a plural, and that its approximate meaning was "the powers." We find many traces of this multiple divinity, which is not differentiated into diverse figures with individual personalities and lives, but is, as it were, an aggregate of cosmic forces diversified in essence but fused in action, a sum of creating, preserving, and destructive powers, a strange and incomparable cloud of gods, moving over the earth, taking counsel with itself, and deriving decisions from its counsels.* Related manifestations can be found among other peoples; but these are all secondary, auxiliary deities—there is nothing comparable to the monumental mono-pluralism of the Elohim myth.

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*Here I can present only the results of research; but anyone who consults the Bible text without prejudice and with an understanding for the meanings of Hebrew words will find examples of this.

Unique also is its further development. Within the multiplicity of the Elohim, a dominant power takes form, a principal being which bears a name; he draws to himself more and more power, and finally, adorned with the mythical insignia of an old tribal god, detaches himself as an independent ruler: Yahweh. . . . Still the people sing: Who is like unto Yahweh among the sons of the gods? But soon the powers that were formerly his companions become his servants, hosts which follow in his train and augment his name: Yahweh of the army of powers, *Yahweh Tzebaoth*. Finally, Elohim sinks to the level of a mere attribute: the only God is named *Yahweh Elohim*.

Yahweh is the divine hero of his people, and the age-old hymns that have come down to us as though from an early geological epoch, scattered through the Prophets, Job, the Psalms, praise his victories and acts of prowess, each an authentic myth; and tell us how he shattered the monster of chaos, and how he laid the foundations of the earth as the morning stars sang together.

And now we encounter that supreme striving in Judaism which did not content itself with a formal unity but advances to a higher, perfect unity, amplifying this cosmic-national Yahweh into the God of the universe, the God of mankind, the God of the soul. But the God of the universe may no longer walk in the evening beneath the trees of his paradise, and the God of mankind may no longer wrestle with Jacob until dawn, and the God of the soul may no longer burn in the bush that is not consumed. The Yahweh of the prophets is no longer a sensory reality; and the old mythical images in which he is glorified are now nothing more than metaphors for his ineffability. At this point, the rationalists would seem to have been proved right, the Jewish myth appears to be ended. But that is not true. Thousands of years later, the *people* had not yet really accepted the idea of a God who could not be sensibly experienced. And, moreover, the rationalists make their concept of the myth too narrow and too small.

We have called myth the recording of divine events as sensory reality. But this does not mean that only the narrative of the acts or sufferings of a god represented as material substance deserve the name of myth. Its meaning is rather: that *we must call myth any narrative of a sensibly real event in which this event is felt and represented as divine.*

THE "civilized" man's knowledge of the world is built upon the basis of causality, upon the contemplation of events in an empirical context of cause and effect. Only through this are we enabled to orient ourselves, to find our way in an endless flux of happenings; but at the same time our sense of the particular event is weakened, because it is apprehended only in its relation to other events, and not in itself. In primitive man, the notion of causality is still very rudimentary. It is almost excluded in his dealings with phenomena such as dreams or death, which it is beyond his power to familiarize himself with by questioning, repetition, re-examination; or in his attitude toward men who affect the course of his life through a dominating demonism that he cannot understand by analogy with his own faculties—such men as the magician and the hero. He does not fit these phenomena into patterns of causality as he does the trivial happenings of his day, he does not assimilate the acts of such men into a chain of events similar to his own deeds and those of his familiars. Unchecked by casuality, he seizes upon their concreteness with all the tension and passion of his soul, and relates them, not to cause and effect, but to their own content, to their own *meaning* as manifestations of the ineffable world, a meaning that is manifested only in them. From this results the inadequate empirical insight of primitive man into some elemental experiences, but also his exalted feeling for the irrational in the particular experience, for that element in it which cannot be understood on the basis of other events, but can only be seen in itself as the symbol of a secret, supra-causal context, the tangible sign of the absolute. He installs these events in the world of the absolute, of the divine: he mythicizes them.

This faculty for mythicizing, for creating myths, survives in later man despite the development of the causal faculty. In times of great tension and intensity of experience, the fetters of causality fall away from man: he experiences the world process as something meaningful beyond causality, as the manifestation of a central meaning that cannot, however, be apprehended by thought, but only by an alertness of the senses, a vibrance of one's whole being, and then it becomes a visible reality, present in all multiplicity. Even today, any man who is truly alive stands in approximately this relation to the man he regards as his hero; he can fit him into a chain of causality, but nevertheless he mythicizes him, because mythical contemplation opens up a deeper, fuller truth than any consideration of causality.

Thus the myth is an eternal function of the soul.

It is a source both of wonder and illumination to observe how this function makes contact with the fundamental attitude of Jewish religiosity and yet encounters in it a heterogeneous, transforming element; how, as though by nature, the Jewish myth is part of a historical continuity and yet at the same time possesses its own special imprint.

THE fundamental attitude of Jewish religiosity and the core of that Jewish monotheism which has been so vastly misunderstood, so cruelly rationalized, is to regard all things as manifestations of God, all events as a revelation of the Absolute. Whereas for the other great monotheist of the Orient—the Indian thinker as we see him in the Upanishads—sensory reality is an illusion to be sloughed off in order to enter into the world of truth, for the Jew sensory reality is a revelation of the divine spirit and will. Hence for the Indian, as later for the Platonist, all myth is metaphor, while for the Jew it is an authentic record of God's revelation on earth. The ancient Jew could narrate only mythically, because for him an event was worth telling only when it had been apprehended in its divine meaning. All the narrative books of the Bible have *one* content: the story of Yahweh's encounters with his people. And later, when from being visible in the pillar of fire and audible in the thunder over Mt. Sinai, God recedes to the silence and darkness of transcendence, this continuity of the mythical narrative is not broken off; true, Yahweh can no longer be perceived, but all his manifestations in nature and history are still within the sensory sphere. These manifestations form the infinite subject-matter of post-Biblical myth.

The nature of what I have called the distinctive character of the Jewish myth follows from what I have said. It does not suspend causality, but merely replaces empirical causality by a metaphysical causality, a causal connection between experienced events and God's being. And this is not meant merely in the sense that the events are brought about by God; it is the more fertile and profound reverse movement that becomes more and more clearly defined: the conception of the influence of man and his works *upon* the destiny of God. This conception, which very early found both a naive and a mystical expression, and which attains its highest expression in Hasidism, teaches that the divine in things lies dormant and can be awakened only by him who approaches things with dedication and sanctifies himself in them. Sensory reality is divine, but it must be *realized* in its divinity through the man who authentically experiences it. The glory of God is banished into concealment, it lies fettered in the fundament of each thing, and in each thing it is released by the man who through vision or action sets free the soul of this thing. And thus to each man it is given to affect God's destinies by his own life; thus each living man is rooted in living myth.

To these two conceptions correspond the two basic forms in which the Jewish myth has developed: the saga of the deeds of Yahweh, and the legend of the central man who perfectly fulfills. The one follows the course of the Bible, so that around the canonical Scripture a kind of parallel, legendary Bible has formed, scattered through innumerable books; but to it have been added a good many episodes of later history, and stories not fixed in time. The second form of myth starts out with certain Biblical characters, particularly those mysterious figures which the canonical text has neglected, such as Enoch, who was transformed from flesh into fire and from a mortal man into Metatron, the prince of the divine countenance; it narrates in cosmic breadth the life of the holy men who ruled over the inner world, from Yeshua of Nazareth to Israel son of Eliezer, the Baal Shem. The first form represents as it were the eternal context, the second the eternal renewal. The first teaches us that we are contingent, the second that we can become absolute. The first is the myth of world preservation, the second of world redemption.

ON THE HORIZON

THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE: CINCINNATI, 1950

Reform Judaism's Fresh Awareness of Religious Problems

EUGENE BOROWITZ

IF THE purpose of the Institute on Reform Jewish Theology, held at the Hebrew Union College on March 20-22, was to formulate a declaration of belief, then it was a failure. The general as well as the Jewish press had carried stories declaring this to be its aim, and the American Jewish community is accustomed to seeing all assemblies of more than two persons bring forth some such statement, tailored to the moment and complete. Yet it can be fairly said this Institute was a success—perhaps just because it did not proclaim a credo.

Had there been no serious problems unsolved by the theology that has been current for the past fifty years or so, there would have been no need to convoke this Institute. Had the rabbinate or Reform Judaism as a whole had the answers to the questions perplexing us, had the Institute not recognized the profound seriousness of modern man's situation, then a platform could easily have been prepared to order and canned for quick mass consumption. Happily, the Institute was neither so short-sighted, smug, nor "practical."

The "religious crisis of our time" is no stock phrase restricted to the theological journals—that it is a sharp day-to-day reality, any man knows who ministers to individuals in their hours of need. The unexpectedly large attendance of rabbis at this mid-season conference can be directly traced to congregants—not a few, but very many—who confess they are unable to accept the old replies, who cannot cease questioning, who have no secure goals but a persistent anxiety and a deep, if hidden, fear of the future. Rabbi Levi Olan of Dallas, Texas, in his paper on "Theology Today," described the situation accurately: "Modern man is in search of a faith that is resourceful enough to give meaning to chaos, and reliable enough to encourage hope for the future. . . . The world seems to have lost its direction. . . . Though we cannot comprehend with precise clarity the nature and extent of the upheaval in Western culture, we are faced with fundamentally radical changes."

AS THE Institute split into its constituent round tables, it became evident that liberal Judaism today is confronted by four basic religious questions.

First, is the belief in God as an objective, divine reality indispensable to modern Judaism, or must it be replaced by something more agreeable to the modern temper?

The traditionalists insisted that God is either unique, eternal, and absolute, or He is nothing. Faith need not have rigorous

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DURING the past two decades, many thoughtful observers have commented on the almost total lack of concern, on the part of the American synagogue, with theological issues and thinking. The announcement of the convening of an Institute of Reform Jewish Theology was received, accordingly, with the keenest attention, being taken as evidence of a reawakening of interest in the spiritual problem of our day. Here EUGENE BOROWITZ reports on the Institute, whose meetings were held at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati toward the end of last March, estimates its accomplishments, and suggests future tasks. Mr. Borowitz is assistant rabbi of Temple Shaare Emeth in St. Louis, Missouri. He was born in New York City in 1924 and was graduated from Hebrew Union College in 1948.

proof. Only a God who is Lord of this world can give it universal standards and a universal meaning. Judaism without personal piety, meaningful prayer, and divine sanction, without an immanent and transcendent God, is no Judaism.

But some felt that the traditional Jewish belief in a God who exists in His own right, who is independent of man, is too much at variance with modern knowledge to be acceptable. His existence cannot be proved. It must be of an order which is completely foreign to our experience. Moreover the recent tragic course of Jewish history makes it difficult to believe in a God of justice who rules history.

Clearly, without a convincing answer to this question, no Jewish theology is possible.

Second, is it possible for man to believe that an existing God is active in our world? As modern men we cannot deny the rational structure of our universe. Any incursion of God into the normal operations of the universe is then a miracle—if not of the natural kind, as the dividing of the Red Sea in the Bible, then of the theological kind, as providence, election, and revelation. Everyone conceded the emotional efficacy of prayer, but whether it actually "worked" was a matter for great doubt. While all affirmed that the people of Israel had a moral and spiritual mission, Israel's choice by God in any active sense was questioned by some. It was generally agreed that revelation was central to Judaism and that revelation involved man's ability to perceive the ultimate principles governing his existence, but whether such a perception involved the idea of God was debated.

Third, to what extent is there authority within Reform Judaism? From its earliest days Reform had introduced into Judaism the idea that modern man had the right to select from tradition whatever elements remained meaningful in his belief and practice. Though Reform insisted upon the authority of Judaism's moral teachings, it seemed to sanction anarchy in regard to everything else in Judaism. Indeed, recent Reform rabbinical deliberations have been one long continuing effort to bring order into this chaos.

Yet if part of our tradition is still binding, what are the criteria by which it is to be recognized? Who are the true and who are the false preachers? Furthermore, is there any divine authority in the sphere of custom and ritual? Do we believe "who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us"? Certainly no guide to Reform Jewish practice will pretend to have *ecclesiastical* authority. But what, then, *will* be the source of its authority?

Fourth, can we still believe in progress as "salvation"? The awesome tragedy of the first half of this century seems to stand as a refutation of the halcyon hopes of the late 19th-century thinkers. If we believe man is able to perfect himself without God's intervention, then Reform teaches that history is a march, now slower, now faster, toward the Messianic era. If we believe man can never reach ultimate goodness, then Reform must hold that it is God who will bring about salvation in the "end of days" or else that history is simply endless movement toward an unattainable goal. Ten or fifteen years ago there was no doubt about the Reform belief in man's march toward the Messianic age. Today some rabbis are wavering in this faith.

ORIGINALLY, too, Reform was convinced that revelation was universal in time. God spoke to us today even as he spoke in Biblical days, and we had to be as obedient as our forefathers. Moreover, man's knowledge progressed qualitatively, and the reform of Judaism was no mere convenience but a demand born of intellectual honesty. Because we are better informed today than in the past, the sacred literature of tradition could occupy only a subsidiary place in the determination of modern Judaism.

Today, this outlook has become problematic. This is not to say that there has been any hint of a compromise with the fundamentally liberal attitude toward tradition. Yet some rabbis at the Institute felt that the Bible, for example, contains a revelation of truth which has not changed and will not change. They concede that the historical context in which that truth was expressed has changed, and their attitude toward the Bible as a text is still critical. But they insist that there is A Truth in the Bible, and that this truth is as important to us as our knowledge of God. The latter expresses the same truth in the concrete terms of our own time and specific conditions. The former serves as a guide and check. There must be a tension between the two. This attitude denies essential progress but not change and reform.

A SPECIAL word is necessary on the impact of the Existentialist interpretation of Judaism offered by Rabbi Emil L. Fackenheim, both in the round tables and by his formal paper. He held that the brutal facts of the past fifty years had demonstrated conclusively man's inability to "save" himself. To those who believe that the universe is without plan or purpose, existence is a tragedy without relief which one should meet with as much courage as one can muster. The religious man, convinced that life has a meaning, believes in a real, transcendent God who will eventually "save" man. Salvation by progress is an error of 19th-century idealism which was grafted on to Judaism by the theological speculation of the last century. To the question of authority, Rabbi Fackenheim felt that only a tentative answer could be given at the moment. While the religious man's relation to God was something certain and necessary, rising above the flow of time, the ceremonial and ritual practices and institutions of Israel could only be defended as a means of accepting one's particular position in the contingencies of history and fulfilling it.

Existentialism came as a profound philosophical shock to the assembled rabbis. But the immediate reaction of annoyance at a new terminology and a new way of thinking soon changed to appreciation of the direct response this point of view has to offer to modern man's perplexity. Religious Existentialism considers man's innate inadequacy and anxiety as the norm of human existence. This view makes our modern bewilderment seem less the result of a catastrophic regression than the natural return from an unwarranted optimism. While there was no mass conversion to Existentialism, most of the rabbis agreed with Rabbi Fackenheim that it would be useful to Reform even if only as an antidote to the 19th-century idealist interpretation of Judaism.

IT IS not surprising that the forty-eight hours allotted for discussion were insufficient for more than a tentative exploration of the various problems. Though it was decided not to issue any comprehensive statement, the Institute as a whole, in plenary session, gave unanimous approval to the acceptance and publication in its name of the following paragraphs on the mission of Israel:

"As touching the life of the Jew, our mission challenges us to win back to positive participation in Jewish religious life (1) those Jews who are un-synagogued; (2) those who have roamed away from traditional Judaism and who are groping for an expression of religion more congenial to their modern outlook; (3) to bring our own concept of Judaism to those Jews who live in non-progressive, religiously static areas of the world; (4) to assist Reform, or Progressive, congregations that are struggling to achieve self-sufficiency, wherever they may be; (5) and to assist in the creation of such congregations wherever the need for them may be expressed. The resuscitated State of Israel, whose spiritual potentialities seem unlimited, presents an important challenge and unique opportunity to Reform Judaism.

"As touching the world in general, our mission has been to some extent fulfilled in the acceptance by Christianity and Mohammedanism of our Bible. However, the practical fulfillment of our mission requires firstly, a recognition that we have been derelict in our devotion to our mission; and secondly, a resolve that we implement the ideals of our faith by supporting every positive and progressive endeavor seeking to establish social justice, in cooperation with all men of good will; and thirdly, to promote within the congregations of Israel projects of social justice and social service among the despised and rejected, regardless of race or creed."

This definition of the practical tasks of Israel was given point by the personal presence and powerful preachment of Rabbi Moses Weiler of Johannesburg, South Africa, who was in the United States for his first visit in the seventeen years since he was graduated from the Hebrew Union College. He spoke to the rabbis of his struggles in establishing Reform synagogues, first in Johannesburg and later in other communities, and of his continuing fight to win a place for them in the South African Jewish community. He emphasized with great force on several occasions during the Institute that it was a real belief in Israel's mission, and the practical activity which the liberal congregations had undertaken because of it, which had vitalized the movement in South Africa. They had tried to win the unaffiliated back to Judaism. They had undertaken projects for their white Christian neighbors and had even made the unprecedented step of opening a non-missionary, self-run school for Negroes. If the American congregations were not alive, he insisted, it was largely because they had lost the sense of mission.

It was not only Rabbi Weiler's vigor which influenced the rabbis to give their unanimous assent to the statement on the mission of Israel, but the corroboration offered by their common experience and thought in the past decade or more. What is perhaps more significant is that, while there was no agreement as to the theological basis of Israel's mission, there was complete unanimity as to its pragmatic meaning.

THE same disparity between the theological and the pragmatic was found in the treatment of the question of a guide for Reform practice. Since the late 30's there has been an increasing clamor for such a guide. At the moment it is the most hotly debated issue in Reform Judaism, both in the rabbinate and among the laity.

As soon as the first registration cards were mailed to the chairman, Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman of St. Louis, Missouri, it was clear that the round table on Reform Jewish practice was to be the best attended of all the round tables scheduled to meet. The chairman had also solicited statements of theological belief from a number of rabbis on the subjects to be discussed at the Institute. Almost unanimously the statements he received on "Reform Jewish Practice" avoided theology and dealt instead with the practicality of a "Guide," or the merits or evils of its adoption. The discussions of the round table at the Institute continued this pattern.

Not only was this non-theological round table one of the best attended at the Institute on Theology; it was also, to speak strictly, a non-theological paper which was best received. Rabbi Lou H. Silberman of Omaha, Nebraska, delivered a lecture on "A *Shulchan Aruch* for Reform Judaism" (a title not of his own choosing). It was a most eloquent *kaddish* to the memory of his beloved teacher, Dr. Jacob Z. Lauterbach, whose eighth *yahrzeit* occurred that day. After a brilliant if brief introductory analysis of the criteria which should be employed, he discussed the significance of the form in which such a guide should be presented. He also decisively demonstrated by examples taken from the history of Reform in America—from its experience with the Union Prayer Book and the Columbus platform, both of which had been the occasion for (unwarranted) fear and trembling—that such a work would not congeal the freedom of the movement or render it a new orthodoxy. It was a mature paper, deserving the warm reception it received.

Shortly thereafter the Institute voted, with but two negative ballots, to accept a resolution of the round table on "Reform Jewish Practice." In effect this statement declared that there was a need for a "Guide to Reform Jewish Practice" and formally asked the Central Conference to take steps to create one. Again it should be noted that while there was no agreement as to the meaning of revelation in modern Judaism, its practical consequences—ritual, ceremonial, law—were almost unanimously desired.

BECAUSE psychiatry has only recently become a matter of great interest to the rabbinate, the discussion on "Judaism and Psychiatry" indicated even more clearly the distance between rabbinical experience with practical matters, and systematic theological thinking.

While no round table discussed this subject, part of an evening was devoted to it by means of a paper by Rabbi Julius Gordon of St. Louis, Missouri. Unfortunately the lecture was an informal one and hence did not pretend to comprehensiveness. It dealt almost entirely with the apparent similarities between the teachings of Judaism and psychiatric dicta, and only partially with the question of the compatibility of the two. On the basis of Freud's *The Future of an Illusion,* Rabbi Gordon felt that while Freud did not accept religion, he did not reject it either, and that harmony was possible.

After the lecture a number of rabbis stated the problems they have had in relation to psychiatry, ranging from lack of cooperation by psychiatrists in practical matters to conflicts with psychiatric theory and therapy on the basis of Jewish belief. The standard reply to these questions by Rabbi Gordon and others who spoke was that psychiatry is necessary if we wish to cure the ill and the maladjusted. Its therapy has marvelous accomplishments to show, and the rabbinate in its traditional Jewish appreciation of *r'fuo* (healing) cannot but accept it. Moreover, it was asserted, every rabbi who deals daily with congregants in the moments of their greatest emotional crises values the insights that psychiatry has given him and which make it possible for him to accomplish his spiritual tasks more successfully. Psychiatry was regarded as a "creative ally," but there was no attempt to make sharp and explicit the terms of the alliance.

IT BECAME obvious to the rabbis themselves, as the Institute progressed, that while their practical maturity had grown in their years of experience, they had neglected to maintain a corresponding theological growth.

This observation will come as a shock to those who have assumed that Reform Judaism is a theological movement. Was not "Jewish theology" a product of Reform, which sought to establish its validity by theological research and formulation? It was Kaufman Kohler, a president of the Hebrew Union College, writing for the cause of Reform Judaism, who produced *Jewish Theology,* the first systematic work on the subject. Even today the works of Baeck, Montefiore, Cohon, and Buber (who must certainly be classed with the liberals) make up nearly all the advanced works in the Jewish field.

Yet even a cursory examination of the history of the movement shows that Reform, like traditional Judaism, has been occupied mainly with the practical problems "of living a Jewish life." Dr. Joseph Silverman, president of the Conference, at the Bar Mitzvah meeting of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1903, was proud to say that it had devoted itself to the questions of: "Public Worship, Marriage and Divorce, Confirmation, Proselytism, Cremation, Zionism, Interpretation of Bible and Talmud, Funeral Reforms, Rabbinical Ethics, Religious Instruction, Circuit Preaching, Religious Propaganda, the Unaffiliated, etc." The index of the Conference Yearbooks has few references to theology, almost all of them in connection with the early (1903-8) discussions on a synod. As Rabbi Hyman G. Enelow so pithily put it in 1904: "The Conference is not a summer school of theology. Its purpose is practical."

The Reform movement today, then, is just emerging from a period in which the rabbis rejected theology almost completely. A Hebrew Union College graduate of the 20's remarked at the Institute that in his day almost everyone was "for religion and against theology." They had a real faith in God as the guarantor of human dignity, but beyond that they had little interest. Their concern with Jewish existence was directed at halting assimilation, fighting anti-Semitism, or enlisting in the ranks of the Zionists or anti-Zionists. Social justice and the prophetic role were the rabbinic order of the day, and the rabbis dedicated themselves to the fight for civil rights and social reform. Theology smacked of "pie in the sky" and was viewed with the traditional Jewish skepticism towards preoccupation with hidden things when there was so much to be done with what had already been revealed. That skepticism still persists.

The Hebrew Union College itself was unable to bring to its students a realization of theology's function and significance. Not in any one department of the College alone, but in every area where the ideas of Judaism were taught, there was detailed scientific investigation and thorough historical training, but no inspiring theological creativity. The imagination neither of the rabbinate nor of the laity was captured for liberal Jewish theology. But to be sure, it is asking a good deal of any group of men that they reverse completely the social currents of their hour.

IN THE very opening hour of the Institute, the venerable Rabbi Leo Baeck gave an inspiring and authoritative analysis of "Jewish Theology Today." Jewish theology, he said, is always, at the hour of its creation, Jewish theology *for* today. When the time is explosive, when frightening events belie the old questions and the old answers, then a new theology is needed.

The questions which are asked in these times of stress, Rabbi Baeck continued, are not really new ones, for only four or five basic questions have troubled man since the beginning of time. One of these questions may, in a sense, be called the "Jewish question": "It is the problem of the transcendent becoming immanent, of the being entering into the passing, the eternal into the transient, the infinite into the finite, the creator into the creature, of the rational growing up out of the non-rational, the fathomable out of the unfathomable, the distinct out of the secret, the commandment out of the mystery. However we call it: creation, revelation, prophecy, law, hope, messianism, it is always the same problem, the problem manifested by Judaism."

This question, or one of the others, will on occasion take hold of a man, and he will be compelled to struggle with it, to make it his own, to join it to his individual way of thinking and speaking. Through this grappling, his thought and language are re-created and the question itself assumes a new form. He is then finally able to give it new expression. These three factors, the problem, the personality, and the resolve of the personality to struggle with the problem are all necessary to bring about a new expression of the problem, a new theology.

But the problem itself is neither new nor without historical experience. To be Jewish theology, the new thinking must be an expression of Jewish tradition. This includes not only the Halacha ("the sphere of law") but also the Aggada ("the sphere of the idea"), the poetry, the philosophy, the customs, and all the rest of our religious treasure. In the sphere of the idea there must be constant change, for its very production is for and through the individual. In keeping with this, the tradition of Judaism has been handed down not from one exclusive authority to any single authoritative body, but to the many congregations. Hence no *Schulchan Aruch* is possible in Judaism in the realm of the idea as there is in the realm of law.

The old liberal theology based on 19th century idealism might have weathered the tumultuous 30's, but it could not survive the bestial 40's. We are concerned because we are in crisis. And what we require is not a single, fabricated statement of belief but bold theological thinking to make clear the relevance of Judaism today.

If this be the way that Jewish theology must take, then the Institute can be said to have made a significant contribution. The rabbis who attended the round table on "Revelation" were well enough satisfied to report to the Institute that they had found their discussions "fruitful and stimulating," even though they were able to arrive at no more than a delineation of the eight major problems they felt existed in that area. What is more, the confrontation with the problems had had a profound personal effect upon the rabbis present. An older member of the rabbinate was able to say with sincerity that it was "one of the most moving spiritual experiences I have had since I was ordained." Equally impressive was the insistence of the rabbis that the Institute's work had been too important to be ended in one three-day meeting. They voted unanimously to formally recommend to the Conference the establishment of a permanent Institute on Theology to meet annually. The problems had captured the men.

THE STUDY OF MAN

THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY IN PROFILE

Report on a Major Study of Race Hatred

NATHAN GLAZER

FOUR years ago, this department reported on an approach to the study of prejudice which, it was predicted, held great promise for the future:* Else Frenkel-Brunswik and R. Nevitt Sanford of the University of California in Berkeley had made an intensive personality study of two groups of college girls, one of which had scored high, and the other low, on a test designed to detect anti-Semitism. The two groups of girls were interviewed at length, and tested by means of the Thematic Apperception Test and other so-called "projective" tests designed to obtain a deeper view of a person than may be gained from superficial contact, questionnaires, or even long interviews.

The remarkable feature of the Berkeley study was its indication that a specific type of personality went hand in hand with anti-Semitism, while another type, perhaps less specific, was likely to be free of it. Of course, like all small-scale projects in the social sciences, this study was hardly more than provocative in its results, not conclusive: only eight girls in each group—prejudiced and unprejudiced—had been subjected to intensive psychological study; it remained possible that the findings held only for middle-class college girls, and that very different results might have been obtained from more mature subjects, or from members of poorer classes—and so on.

THE five-volume series just published by Harper's under the title "Studies in Prejudice" has won immediate recognition as a landmark, not only in the study of group prejudice, but in American social science generally. The major work, *The Authoritarian Personality*, and its four companion volumes, sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, sum up the results of the largest research project ever undertaken into the nature of anti-Semitism, and it is certain that its findings on the personality structure of the potential followers of hate movements will influence discussion and inspire writing and research for years to come. NATHAN GLAZER here attempts to outline the major theory developed as the result of the studies, and to describe the chief kinds of scientific evidence gathered by the various research teams that worked on the project. Mr. Glazer is assistant editor of COMMENTARY. Future issues will contain further articles exploring the insights and generalizations of these volumes from different points of view.

HOWEVER, the work of Drs. Frenkel-Brunswik and Sanford was not fated to remain an isolated "pilot" study holding forth a promise never to be translated into achievement, such as we may find by the score in the professional journals. Funds were made available by the American Jewish Committee to enable the unusually rich insights of this first study (which the Committee had also financed) to be followed further, wherever they might lead. The American Jewish Committee's interest was twofold: first, the project fitted into its general policy of encouraging scholarship that increases public enlightenment on problems of Jewish concern; second, it sought to gain the benefits and guidance of modern social research for its practical program in fighting anti-Semitism.

Thus, a much larger study than the first was initiated; and from its beginning with a sampling of female students at the University of California, it expanded to a study of the minds of professional women in general, middle-class and middle-aged men in service clubs on the West Coast, persons under treatment at a psychiatric clinic, inmates of San Quentin Prison, men at a school for merchant marine officers, working-class men and women, members of parent-teachers' associations, women's clubs, church groups, and other middle-class groups—not to mention additional groups of students at the University of Oregon and George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Altogether, 2,099 persons were given an elaborate set of questionnaires, and of these, eighty were chosen for intensive interviewing and testing. All along, the most painstaking techniques were employed to ensure objectivity: at each stage, two or more of the project workers were engaged in coding and classifying data independently of each other so as to eliminate errors caused by the bias or personal shortcomings of the individual researchers.

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* See "The Social Scientists Dissect Prejudice," COMMENTARY, May 1946.

All this is described in great detail, analyzed, and summed up in a huge volume, *The Authoritarian Personality,* written by T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, in collaboration with Betty Aron, Maria Hertz Levinson, and William Morrow (Harper, 990 pp., $7.50). Large as it is, however, this volume deals with only a part—though by far the largest—of the whole elaborate research enterprise devoted to the study of the anti-Semitic personality. Concurrently, groups of researchers in New York and Chicago had undertaken studies completely independent of the main work in California; and these additional studies are reported in two other books: *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation,* by Nathan Ackerman and Marie Jahoda (Harper, 135 pp., $2.50; and *Dynamics of Prejudice: A Psychological and Sociological Study of Veterans,* by Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz (Harper, 227 pp., $3.50). Both these volumes, based upon different research techniques, offer independent conclusions in no way tailored to coincide with the main study.

It should also be mentioned here that two further volumes, reporting on a fourth and fifth project, have also been published by Harper: *Rehearsal for Destruction: A Study of Political Anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany,* by Paul W. Massing (341 pp., $4.00), and *Prophets of Deceit: A Study of the Techniques of the American Agitator,* by Leo Lowenthal and Norbert Guterman (164 pp., $2.50).* The first is a historical study, the second a close analysis of the speeches of a large sampling of anti-Semitic demagogues. Since our central interest here is the personality of the anti-Semite, neither of these books is, strictly speaking, within our area of concern, though the latter of the two certainly offers many insights, and very important ones, into the structure of at least one type of anti-Semitic personality, and at the same time complements and confirms the picture of the anti-Semitic personality given in the main study by showing how the appeals of the anti-Semitic demagogue are clearly directed at just that type of personality which is portrayed at full length in *The Authoritarian Personality.*

The entire research undertaking was planned by Max Horkheimer and the Institute of Social Research, and the volumes reporting its results were edited by Professor Horkheimer and Dr. Samuel H. Flowerman, head of the Department of Scientific Research of the American Jewish Committee.

WHAT is unique about *The Authoritarian Personality*—and I think it *is* unique in American social science—is not the vast range and complexity of the empirical data, or the care with which they are analyzed; as far as these aspects are concerned, there are a few similar studies in American social science. Nor yet does its uniqueness lie in its wonderful interplay between theory and research, for which leading American social scientists have been pleading for years; here, too, we may find a few similar examples. What is unique is rather the *type* of theory that animates *The Authoritarian Personality.* It is not the simple, rather dimensionless idea pursued stubbornly through a vast amount of research, of which W. L. Warner's studies of class and Lewis M. Terman's of gifted children form such good examples: in such work the leading idea hardly grows. Nor is this book, on the other hand, filled with the kind of abstract, non-historical formulations that serve for theory in such works as *The American Soldier* or *Management and the Worker*—where the idea grows, but too often in the direction of mere terminological elaboration rather than toward new insights. For all its typically American empirical investiture, the idea in *The Authoritarian Personality* is an idea in the European and philosophic sense, at once specific and concrete, and yet broad enough to link the largest developments of society with the most subtle characteristics of personality. It is an idea of the kind one finds in Marx, or Freud, or Dewey, an idea which may be stated in a paragraph but can be expanded into a lifetime's fruitful study. It is the idea of authoritarianism as a fundamental form of our society and one characteristic of social organization, the family, and individual personality.

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* Reviewed in COMMENTARY, February 1950 and March 1950, respectively.

This idea is the product of a group of social scientists who, under the leadership of Max Horkheimer, formed the Institute of Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung) in Frankfort in Weimar Germany; after Hitler came to power, they migrated first to Paris, and then to New York. In the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* ("Journal of Social Research"), which the Institute published from 1932 to 1941, as well as in a number of special publications—of which the most important was a huge tome, *Autorität und Familie* (Paris, 1936)—the Institute combined a certain tradition of European philosophical and sociological thinking with an interest in empirical social procedures to produce a body of work which this writer believes to be as yet unparalleled in the social sciences for richness of detail and depth of insight.

It is hard to characterize its position in a few phrases, but it is perhaps not unfair to say that the Institute tried to join the sociological heritage of Marx to Freud's psychological method within the context of that philosophical tradition which has emphasized the growing power of reason to deal with man's aggressive instincts and social problems. The studies that appeared in the *Zeitschrift* emphasized, among other things, the critical examination of social thinking and culture: many of the essays published contribute to the "sociology of knowledge"—that discipline which holds the social and personal needs of men to be the origin of their thinking. Often, it seems to me, these essays contributed to even more than that: the introduction of the psychoanalytic point of view served to deepen the writers' understanding and protect them from mechanistic excesses. Erich Fromm contributed critiques of anthropological and psychoanalytic thinking, Ernest Schachtel a critique of "personality testing," Leo Lowenthal and T. W. Adorno critiques of the role of certain literary and musical tendencies in society—and these essays are today still capable of having a strong and positive influence on American social science.

However, the Institute had no great immediate influence in America. A few books were published by its members, and these were read with interest by only a limited circle of readers. It is true that persons who had been connected with the Institute did play important roles in certain areas of American social science—Erich Fromm in psychoanalysis, Ernest Schachtel in the field of Rorschach testing, Karl Wittfogel in Oriental studies—but these men did not work in America as members of the Institute. Perhaps the breakup of the optimistic hopes of the European Left and labor movements made it impossible to preserve the common point of view on which the Institute rested—which was socialist, in the most fundamental sense.

It is the Institute for Social Research that is chiefly responsible for the series now before us: the authors of three of the volumes—Paul W. Massing, Leo Lowenthal, and T. W. Adorno—are members of the Institute today, and one of the authors of a fourth, Marie Jahoda, has been identified with it in the past. And it is the Institute which, in its huge joint volume on *Authority and the Family* in 1936, first raised on a major scale the question of the social role of authoritarianism—the authoritarian personality, the authoritarian family, and the authoritarian society. Let us go back to that earlier volume and quote, from the English abstract, the original formulation of the crucial role authority plays in modern society:

"As we analyzed the meaning for society of the political, ethical and religious conceptions of modern times, authority appeared more and more clearly to be a decisive factor. The strengthening of the belief that there must always be a superior and an inferior and that obedience is a necessity, constitutes one of the most important cultural factors in the dynamic forces that shape society. . . . Of all the social institutions which make the individual receptive to the influence of authority, however, the family must be recognized as the most important. In its circle the individual experiences the impact of social forces. . . . The family largely determines the role these forces play in the formation of his spiritual life. Moreover, the patriarchal structure of the modern family serves by its very nature as an important preparation for the acceptance of authority in society. The great accomplishments of the modern epoch are products of a specific form of social cooperation, toward the maintenance of which the family has made an important contribution with its training for the acceptance of authority."

The German middle class would appear to represent this syndrome of authority—in personality, in family, and in society—*par excellence*: in its strict familial set-up, with the dominant father and the submissive mother and children; in its attachment to the hierarchies of bureaucracy and military organization; finally, in its creation and acceptance of the authoritarian state in its purest form. And it was this group that was also responsible for the most murderous form of anti-Semitism ever known. Might it not therefore be possible that anti-Semitism was a direct expression of the authoritarian personality? And not only in Germany, but wherever the authoritarian personality is to be found? Something like this chain of reasoning must have gone into the impulse which produced *The Authoritarian Personality.*

IN THE study itself, the theory is developed much more empirically, and thus more in accord with American canons of scientific and systematic procedure. General ideas are left well in the background, and empirical procedures occupy the foreground, at least in the initial stages. The volume begins with the measurement of anti-Semitism by means of a questionnaire (called the "A-S scale") that asks the subject whether he approves or disapproves of a large number of statements about Jews. The presumed amount of anti-Semitism in an individual or group can then be conveniently indicated by a number or score. It is then demonstrated that anti-Semitism is closely connected with the more general pattern of ethnocentrism (the dislike of all minorities and out-groups—Negroes, Japanese, aliens, and nationals of other countries), which is measured by a second questionnaire, the "E scale." The link between anti-Semitism and ethnocentrism is shown by correlating scores on the one scale with scores on the other—and the correlations are very high indeed.

By a similar correlation of scores on different scales, it is shown that anti-Semitism *and* ethnocentrism are related to a more general attitude, that of "politico-economic conservatism" (measured by the "PEC scale"). Finally, a fourth scale—the "F scale"—by asking the subject whether he agrees or disagrees with a large variety of apparently diverse attitudes, measures the extent of presumed "pre-fascist" and anti-democratic attitudes—in effect, the degree to which one may be said to manifest the "authoritarian personality." If anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism, and politico-economic conservatism are closely related to the presence of the presumed pre-fascist traits, while the absence of anti-Semitism and ethnocentrism and the presence of liberal attitudes in political and social matters are related to low scores on the scale of pre-fascist traits, the evidence is on hand for the assertion that a specific syndrome exists that includes anti-Semitism, prejudice in general, politico-economic conservatism, and a variety of other anti-democratic attitudes, and that there is therefore a type of personality which may be called "authoritarian."

THE extraordinarily elaborate and detailed statistical methods used to validate every step in the process of reasoning almost disarm criticism; one fears being accused of quibbling, if one takes exception to certain details of procedure. Nevertheless, before proceeding with the discussion of the essential contribution of this volume, the writer would like to set down several reservations, some of which may be worth careful study by more competent critics.

First, it is important to note that the questionnaires all take a somewhat unusual form: each item is phrased as a strong assertion which is considered anti-Semitic, ethnocentric, or conservative; they express sentiments such as one finds in common conversation or in newspapers. These questionnaires seem completely adequate to the purpose of differentiating those who assent to such expressions from those who do not; but they are perhaps less adequate as statements of the actual content of anti-Semitic, or ethnocentric, or conservative thought. When the researcher, on the basis of a subject's agreement or disagreement with a series of statements composed by the researcher himself, proceeds to determine the nature of the subject's thought-processes, is he not moving in a circle? Thus one of the authors, Daniel Levinson, in his discussion of "The Structure of Anti-Semitic Ideology," writes: "One striking characteristic of the imagery in anti-Semitic ideology is its stereotypy. . . . There is . . . a tendency to over-generalize single traits, to subscribe to statements beginning 'Jews are . . .' or 'The Jews do not. . . .'" However, since the questionnaire itself proposes generalizations in its phrasing of different items, how do we know that this is in fact the "tendency" of anti-Semitic ideology? Is not Professor Levinson here leading the witness?

Second, a number of the items seem to reflect an extreme position as to what ideas are anti-Semitic, or ethnocentric, or conservative. For example: if the subject agrees with the questionnaire statement, "It is wrong for Jews and Gentiles to intermarry," can that be considered evidence of general anti-Semitism? The authors have what seems to me a very strong answer: it is not *they* who think certain statements are anti-Semitic; rather, it turns out empirically, that those who agree with these statements also happen to be those who score high on the whole test for anti-Semitism. And there is a further safeguard: the statistical procedure is such that if scores on any individual item do not correlate highly with scores on the total test, that item is dropped. Nevertheless, this procedure could overlook a small minority who would assent to the specific sentiment on purely unemotional and rational grounds: there would not be many such, yet there is something at fault in a point of view which tends to overlook their existence.

It is important to note the general tendency of this and other questions, for it is a tendency which operates throughout the book. The authors proceed on the basis of certain rather simple and single-minded assumptions as to what is progressive or liberal. One example appears above, in their assumption that opposition to intermarriage can only be a sign of prejudice. From other items on the questionnaire, and from general discussion, it is clear that the authors consider religion "reactionary" —unless "modernized" into a general desire to realize ideals.

Again, the authors could answer that the process of correlational analysis removes all initial biases: if these items were not correlated with the general tendency measured by the rest of the scale, they would have been dropped. True enough. But the initial selection, with its unstated political and social assumptions, will rule out many other possible questions that would test other hypotheses. For example, they do not seek to discover whether certain kinds of religious feelings or attitudes might not encourage freedom from authoritarianism. Only two statements on the original "F scale" refer to religion: "The modern church, with its many rules and hypocrisies, does not appeal to the deeply religious person; it appeals mainly to the childish, the insecure, and the uncritical." "Every person should have a deep faith in some supernatural force higher than himself to which he gives total allegiance and whose decisions he does not question."

There remains a third caveat: While the correlations between the scores on the different tests are amazingly high—for example, the correlation between the "F" (anti-democratic) and the "E" (ethnocentric) scales is .73—the figures still indicate a sizable number of subjects who score high on one and low on another; and these subjects are for the most part ignored throughout this volume. True, a number of them were included in the group of eighty who were intensively studied by means of interviews—but the characteristics of such people as a group are not given as much consideration as are the characteristics of those who score uniformly high or low. Those who score in the middle on the three scales are given even less consideration. In effect, it is implied that only individuals with extreme and consistent attitudes have clearly defined characters, or play a dynamic role in society. Perhaps. But one wishes the specific character of the moderates and those with mixed attitudes had been taken up at greater length.

But to return to the main line of our discussion: these reservations can hardly be said to withstand the cumulative effect of the statistical procedures. The demonstration of the close relationship between the scales gives ample ground for writing the remaining four parts of the book on the assumption that there is a specific authoritarian personality that may hold the key to our understanding of anti-Semitism.

BUT what, then, is the authoritarian personality? The all-important "F scale" tells us part of the story, for it is conveniently divided into nine clusters of items, and these nine characteristics are one way of defining the authoritarian personality. Here they are, in the authors' own words:

"*Conventionalism:* Rigid adherence to conventional, middle-class values.

"*Authoritarian submission:* Submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of the in-group.

"*Authoritarian Aggression:* Tendency to be on the lookout for, and to condemn, reject, and punish people who violate conventional values.

"*Anti-intraception:* Opposition to the subjective, the imaginative, the tender-minded.

"*Superstition and stereotype:* The belief in mystical determinants of the individual's fate; the disposition to think in rigid categories.

"Power and 'toughness': Preoccupation with the dominance-submission, strong-weak, leader-follower dimension; identification with power figures, over-emphasis upon the conventionalized attributes of the ego; exaggerated assertion of strength and toughness.

"Destructiveness and cynicism: Generalized hostility, vilification of the human.

"Projectivity: The disposition to believe that wild and dangerous things go on in the world; the projection outwards of unconscious emotional impulses.

"Sex: Exaggerated concern with sexual 'goings-on'."

But why and how does the authoritarian personality develop these traits? Why and how do the researchers—even before they begin testing—assume that these traits will be shown by authoritarian types?

Because they proceed on the basis of an elaborate theory of the psychological development of authoritarian and non-authoritarian types—and this set of attitudes can be deduced from this theory. The latter can be traced back at least as far as Erich Fromm's contribution to *Authority and the Family,* where he developed the notion of a "sado-masochistic" type and a theory of its relation to contemporary society. Here, in *The Authoritarian Personality,* this notion is much more fully developed. In Part II, Dr. Else Frenkel-Brunswik proceeds directly to the testing of it by means of a close analysis of the interviews that were conducted with eighty individuals—forty-five prejudiced and thirty-five unprejudiced, divided equally between men and women—who were selected from the original 2,099 subjects for further intensive study. And on the basis of her analysis, she presents the following excellent summary of the theory of the developmental patterns which produce authoritarian and non-authoritarian types:

"When we consider the childhood situation of the most prejudiced subjects, we find reports of a tendency toward rigid discipline on the part of the parents, with affection which is conditional rather than unconditional, i.e., dependent upon approved behavior on the part of the child. Related to this is a tendency . . . to base inter-relationships on rather closely defined roles of dominance and submission, in contradistinction to equalitarian policies. . . .

"Forced into a surface submission to parental authority [because of this harsh discipline], the child develops hostility and aggression which are poorly channelized. The displacement of a repressed antagonism toward authority may be . . . the principal source of his antagonism toward outgroups. . . .

"Fear and dependency seem to discourage the ethnocentric child from conscious criticism of the parents. It is especially the prejudiced man who seems intimidated by a threatening father figure. Display of a rough masculine facade seems to be a compensation for such an intimidation. . . . [The woman, on the other hand, responds with conventional 'feminine' behavior. But for both we find a] rigid repression of hostility against parents [which] may be accompanied by an occasional breaking through of drives in a crude and unsocialized form. . . .

"The fact that the negative feelings against the parents have to be excluded from consciousness may be considered as contributing to the general lack of insight, rigidity of defense, and narrowness of the ego so characteristic of high scorers. Since the unprejudiced child as a rule does not seem to have to submit to stern authority . . . he can afford in later life to do without strong authority, and he does not need to assert his strength against those who are weaker. . . .

"The parents of prejudiced subjects . . . also tend toward preoccupation with problems of status. . . . What is socially accepted and what is helpful in the climbing of the social ladder is considered good, and what deviates, what is different, and what is socially inferior is considered bad. . . .

"[The prejudiced person therefore] expects—and gives—social approval on the basis of external moral values including cleanliness, politeness, and the like. He condemns others for their nonconformity to such values. . . . The functioning of his superego is mainly directed toward punishment, condemnation, and the exclusion of others, thus mirroring the type of discipline to which he himself was apparently exposed. . . .

"The low scorer seems more oriented toward love and less toward power than is the high scorer. The former is more capable of giving affection since he has received more real affection. He tends to judge people more on the basis of their intrinsic worth than on the basis of conformity to social mores. . . . As a child, he seems to have enjoyed the benefit of the help of adults in working out his problems of sex and aggression. He thus can more easily withstand propaganda which defames minorities and glorifies war. By virtue of the greater integration of his instinctual life, he becomes a more creative and sublimated individual. He is thus more flexible and less likely to form stereotyped opinions about others. . . . He is able to express disagreement with, and resentment against, the parents more openly, thus achieving a much greater degree of independence from the parent and from authorities in general. . . ."

If now we refer back to the nine characteristics which the original "F scale" tried to find in the authoritarian type, we can see how each of these nine may be seen as a natural organic growth from this development pattern: the authoritarian are conventional because of their original need to conform, under a strong, status-oriented, parental discipline; they are submissive to authority because of the same reason; they are "anti-intraceptive"—afraid of the subjective and the imaginative—because of their need to suppress their own aggressive strivings, and their fear of what they may discover by looking into themselves; and so on through the list.

We know, from the high inter-correlation of the items on the "F scale" and the high correlation of this scale with the other scales, that we have a pattern here: but where is our direct evidence that the developmental theory which explains the pattern is correct? We have an astonishing number of bits of empirical evidence—principally from the interviews, but also elsewhere—that support the outline of the developmental pattern we have just quoted.

For example: We find, in the interviews, that the prejudiced uniformly say their parents are the most wonderful in the world, and practically never breathe a word of criticism about them, while the unprejudiced quite often criticize their parents and refer to them as "ordinary people." However, we also find that in the "TAT" test—where a person is supposed to reveal something of his unconscious feelings by telling stories about pictures with which he is presented—that the prejudiced are full of violence and aggression and suspicion against parental figures, while the unprejudiced tell stories which indicate confidence toward such figures.

Again: we find (this time in the questionnaires) that those who disagree with their parents' political views—no matter what the direction of this disagreement, apparently—are also somewhat less prejudiced than those who agree.

Again: we find, in the interviews, that the prejudiced are oriented toward their fathers, as the principal figure in the family constellation, while the unprejudiced are oriented toward their mothers. Fathers, we know in general but can also see from the interviews, symbolize power; mothers symbolize love. (In a number of cases, indeed, the prejudiced have lost mothers in childhood, while there are no such cases among the unprejudiced.)

It is such items of evidence, extracted by a brilliant analysis of the interviews, that strongly support the total picture of the origin of the authoritarian personality given by Dr. Frenkel-Brunswik.

The analysis thus far is unquestionably a purely psychological one. All along, however, we have been warned that we cannot see the problem of authoritarianism and prejudice in psychological terms alone. The social background in which it should be placed is left undefined in this book: yet we are assured that it is important, and it is assumed as a matter of course that it is *known:* that is, that there exist real relations between different social factors that the rational man can discern, and that the failure to discern them can be the result only of psychological inadequacy or of a social atmosphere in which the true structure of reality is purposely disguised.

This is one of the major assumptions made in Part IV of the book, written by Professor T. W. Adorno, which is its only non-statistical section and consists of an analysis of the ideological patterns revealed in the interviews. This is at once the most brilliant and most debatable part of the volume. What is brilliant is its analysis in detail of the ideas of the authoritarian type of personality. What is debatable is the point of view it tends to reveal in passing.

To turn first to the analysis: Take, for example, the common remark of the anti-Semite who shakes his head at the state of the world and says: "There's going to be bloodshed." Note, says Professor Adorno, that this phrase avoids saying that Gentiles will shed Jewish blood: the implication remains that, conceivably, Jews may shed Gentile blood. By allowing this as a possibility, the anti-Semite simultaneously gives himself a justification for what he would like to see done to Jews. But then, too, he does like the idea of bloodshed in general. "On the deepest level," says Professor Adorno, "they do not distinguish between subject and object. The underlying destructive urge pertains to the enemy and to oneself. Destructiveness is truly 'totalitarian'."

We could report many more such analyses of simple elements of ideology, with the astonishing wealth of meaning they uncover. But let us proceed to what we consider debatable.

Professor Adorno believes that we "are living in potentially fascist times," and this assumption pervades the book. The "F scale," it will be recalled, is supposed to measure "pre-fascist" traits. One cannot help but feel that this hypothesis remains independent of empirical results, whether or not they support it. For example, Professor Adorno writes: "A large number of . . . constituents of political ideology . . . seem to permeate [both prejudiced and unprejudiced], while, by their own momentum, making for potentially fascist persuasions. Here belong . . . general ignorance and confusion in political matters, the habits of 'ticket thinking' and 'personalization,' resentment of unions, of government interference in business, of income limitations, and a number of other trends."

Can it be demonstrated that "resentment of unions" or of "income limitations" are "potentially fascist persuasions"? Here one would not be convinced by the argument that they are correlated with other points of view that are undeniably fascist. For why may not these attitudes conceivably be the ones in a generally authoritarian personality that offer hope for action in behalf of democracy? If a person is resentful of unions he may be resentful of what he conceives of as an illegitimate infringement of his liberties; perhaps he is protecting his individuality, his sense of his own capacity to make his own way, perhaps he thinks he is resisting becoming part of a mass. Similarly, even in this book one can find evidence indicating that resentment of the limitation of one's income may not be a pre-fascist trait; for example, the non-authoritarians are more interested in sensual and material pleasures, less interested in status and power, than the authoritarians. And in fact, is not income sought for pleasure as well as status and power?

My point is that in a passage such as the one quoted, and in others, there are many assumptions as to the structure of the given social reality in which we live that are not examined; or, if examined, there is no support given for the point of view taken. There is rather a faith that social science will—or perhaps already has—discovered how society works and how its trends are related to each other. With this faith the authors can label as irrational — and therefore inadequate — attitudes whose irrationality is by no means demonstrated.

Against this objection, it could be argued that it is not within the scope of this book to determine the social background of the authoritarian personality, or to judge the actual, rational adequacy of political viewpoints. As we may read in the final chapter, "We have not . . . gone into the social and economic processes that . . . determine the development of characteristic family patterns." Yet very often one or another of the authors writes as if he, or someone else, had done so, and in addition to pointing out the empirical relation between attitudes he will go on to criticize certain attitudes directly, as if the major political and economic tendencies of our society, with their implications, have already been established.

TO SUM UP: this impressive volume demonstrates that anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism and conservatism, are, in large measure, the external characteristics of a certain type of personality widely prevalent in our society. It also suggests what personal history, and what type of family, may produce this authoritarian type. It does not, however, demonstrate the relations of this type to the larger structures of society. It does not, for example, find any relation between occupation, class position, or income, and authoritarianism; nor can it say whether or not large-scale social changes would significantly change the frequency of the authoritarian type in our society.

The authors do state their belief that exclusively psychological measures would be woefully inadequate as a means of enabling larger numbers of people to develop a non-authoritarian character structure, and that social changes of some specific type would be more efficacious. It would certainly be worthwhile to carry the investigation further along these lines, even though it seems very difficult to ascertain just what measures would be beneficial in practice and what measures would be harmful. It is much easier to study what *is*—and the authoritarian personality *is*—than to study what the actual effect of certain social developments, as yet only hypothetical, would be.

We have yet to consider—and we can do so only briefly—the two additional volumes on the personality of the anti-Semite in the "Studies in Prejudice" series. *Dynamics of Prejudice,* by Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, is a study of a random sampling of some one hundred and fifty veterans in Chicago, all of them former enlisted men, and none of them Negroes or Jews. Every man was given a long clinical interview ranging over many questions, and then the results were statistically analyzed in terms of various categories.

The most significant results are two: (1) those veterans who are successful in their careers are the least prejudiced; those who are unsuccessful are the most prejudiced; and (2) the prejudiced seem characterized by what are called "inadequate controls" and a "lack of ego-strength."

The first result is simple to understand and easy to interpret. It is the second that offers many problems, and it is not easy to disentangle the purely verbal from the substantial ones. It seems that those men who reject army discipline, who reject what are called "controlling institutions" (government, the powers-that-be in general, the status quo), are prone to prejudice. "Intolerance, like hating the army," write Drs. Bettelheim and Janowitz, "is an expression of the same body of underlying tendencies, namely, a dissatisfaction with existing society, which expresses itself through all channels available."

The unprejudiced, on the other hand, appear to think that society—the government, the army, religion, and so on—are all right.

Superficially, this seems to contradict the results of *The Authoritarian Personality*—for there we read that it is those who *accept* society as it is, who approve of its values, and who conform and are conventional, who are the prejudiced; while it is just those who rebel against it, who reject its values, who do not conform and are unconventional, who are the unprejudiced.

In part, the contradiction can be resolved by reference to the social classes of the subjects each study concentrates on. The veterans belong on the whole to the working class or a similar group. The sampling in the California study, while it includes a considerable number of working people, is in largest part middle-class. Conceivably, then, the conforming middle-class person is anti-Semitic, and the conforming working-class person is not; while the non-conforming middle-class person is not anti-Semitic, and the non-conforming lower-class person is. If this is indeed the situation, one might well find reasons to explain it. For example, non-conformity in the middle class might be considered the expression of a rational outlook toward the world that sees through conventional values as inconsistent, harmful, and irrelevant; this would be the outlook of an unprejudiced person. In the less favored lower classes, non-conformity might be the sign of a resentful personality, rather than an enlightened one, and the resentment here would tend to well up and spill over on institutional authorities and all other conspicuous targets.

All this is highly speculative, and both sides might reject this resolution of their conflict. Looking now at another phase, however, we find that the family pattern which Drs. Bettelheim and Janowitz believe to be the cause of a disorganized ego and lack of self-control (to paraphrase their technical terms) turns out to be more or less the same pattern that the writers of *The Authoritarian Personality* believe leads to too much submission to controls—that is, a family characterized by harsh discipline, deficiency of love, failure to properly "internalize" parental values, and so on. Thus the two groups of researchers find that the same familial matrix produces opposite types of personality: the Chicago study sees a personality that lacks controls, the California study sees a personality that submits itself to controls that are too rigid and inflexible. Oddly enough, both conclusions correspond respectively with popular notions of the effects of lower-class child-rearing on the one hand and of middle-class child-rearing on the other. And they also correspond with facts as to the types of mental disorders and crimes characteristic of the two classes: in the lower class, psychosis and crimes of passion, in the middle class, neurosis and crimes of calculation. Perhaps, then, our original hypothesis that the differences in the two studies are caused by differences in the predominant class affiliations of the subjects is sound.

We may propose another hypothesis: that the Chicago and the California studies do not have opposing results, but really tap different layers of the personality. And since each Chicago interview lasted, on the average, at least two or three times as long as each California interview, this is by no means an arbitrary assumption. This hypothesis clears up the difficulties in the following way. Both the Chicago and the California groups agree that a major initial frustration in one's childhood (harsh discipline, lack of love), leads to strong aggressions, unreleased hostility, and a failure of "internalization." Now the Chicago group believes that this aggression and hostility is released *directly* against both ethnic groups and "controlling institutions"—the forces of the status quo. But the California group believes that the aggression and hostility are inhibited by fear of the power of the father, first, and then of the controlling institutions; this produces surface conformity, but underneath uncontrollable violence and hostility—"an occasional breaking through of drives in a crude and unsocialized form"—can be found. Is it not possible that the Chicago group plumbed directly to this layer of the personality and decided that the aggression formed there was a more important determinant of attitudes than the psychic forces suppressing the aggression?

However, these are purely hypothetical resolutions of the contradictions involved: it is conceivable that they may be refuted and that the conclusions of the two studies will remain irreconcilable.

But there is still another disagreement between the Chicago and California studies, and this one cannot be bridged even speculatively. Here we have to do with differences of conviction rather than scientific findings. The disagreement is in answering the question: what should be done about the aggression and hostility of the prejudiced? Bettelheim and Janowitz, as I see it, emphasize measures of psychological relief—changing the ways of child-rearing so that the child will meet with more love and less discipline, more acceptance and less rejection, and thus develop a good control mechanism, and not have to work up so much aggression and hostility that he has to vent them through prejudice. They also propose social measures whose effect would be to reduce strain in adult life—such things as a guaranteed annual wage, for example, that would reduce the number of people whose social position was deteriorating rather than improving. Their aim is social changes that would add to the docile and conforming group, and diminish the wild and non-conforming group.

The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality*, on the other hand, do not believe psychological measures could be put into effect on a sufficiently large scale: "What," they ask, "of parents who with the best will and the best feelings are thwarted by the need to mold the child so that he will find a place in the world as it is? Few parents can be expected to persist for long in educating their children for a society that does not exist, or even in orienting themselves toward goals which they share only with a minority." And those social measures which the Chicago group feels can lead to greater security on the part of the individual, the California group would consider mere palliatives that are unable to check the trend to a fascist society.

Essentially, the difference boils down to a judgment as to the kind of society we live in. The Chicago group believes we live in what is fundamentally a benign society, in which conformity and acceptance represent psychic health, non-conformity and rebellion represent disorder. To this, the California group answers: "We must object . . . strenuously to the [hypothesis] which equates conformity with psychic health, non-conformity with psychic disturbance. . . . If good external adjustment is to be psychologically healthy, it must be in response to an environment which sufficiently gratifies the most important needs of the individual." And this environment, it is the firm view of the California group, our present society does not provide.

Our third volume, *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder* by Nathan Ackerman and Marie Jahoda, leans mildly toward the view of *The Authoritarian Personality*. The word to emphasize is "mildly," for this book is an eminently reasonable one, and avoids excess and dogma in a field where these are rife. Its thesis is that, to examine the psychological roots of prejudice, we had best go to those who have made the most thorough and complete psychological examinations, the psychoanalysts. The authors got a number of psychoanalysts to provide them with very full reports on those of their patients who showed, or had shown, anti-Semitic symptoms. To the twenty-seven case histories thus gathered, thirteen more persons under treatment by social service agencies were added.

The authors take the greatest care to list all the factors that prevent their results from being in any way decisive. The value of their work, they would be the first to agree, lies in its experimental and pioneer effort to make use of a large number of psychoanalytic records for social research purposes, rather than in any definite conclusions one might draw from it as to the causes or nature of anti-Semitism.

Therefore it is all the more interesting to come across many points in the Ackerman and Jahoda book that corroborate details in the other two studies: thus, their subjects show a weakness of insight, and a great ease of "projectivity" in which the "unwanted parts of the self" are "projected" onto Jews or Negroes, and so on. Drs. Ackerman and Jahoda also emphasize the importance of the lack of love in childhood as a cause of adult prejudice. They make the excellent point that the intensity of a prejudiced attitude derives less from the total personality than from the social group to which one belongs. In the middle class, violent prejudice is taboo; in the lower class, it is a matter of course. The social situation plays an enormous role by permitting and evoking anti-Semitism: personality is not the whole story.

How might one sum up the contribution of these studies? Like most of the achievements of social science, the California study ends up by precipitating a *type,* fully delineated and elaborated, out of a mass of apparently unrelated data—a specific, concrete product of history which plays a significant role in our society. The authoritarian type of personality becomes as real to us now, and becomes as ubiquitous a part of our thinking, as Marx's "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat," or Weber's "traditional" and "bureaucratic" society.

But we must be clear as to the nature of this type: it is psychological, the product fundamentally of family environment. Certainly it must be related to the larger social forms of our society: but as to the specific relation it has to these larger forms, the evidence in this book is inconclusive. The presence of authoritarianism, the authors find, does not have a high correlation with social background, occupation, income, education, religion, or any other major social factor. Thus, authoritarianism cannot be said to be the typical syndrome of the middle class or the workers, or more characteristic of one or another social or economic group—it correlates only with other psychological patterns and with certain psychological factors in personal development.

Nor is this psychological type related very closely to the dynamic movement of society, to social trends and social changes. We still need to know what effect depression and prosperity, war and peace, or any other social changes have on the behavior of authoritarian types, or on the chances that larger or smaller numbers of them will be "created" by society. All this must be left for future study, or for speculation.

Practically, the authoritarian type demonstrates to us that the instinct of liberal and minority groups in the past few decades was sound—anti-Semitism, anti-Negroism, anti-foreignism, are linked; furthermore, we can actually tell from the gross patterns of personality what kind of people are most likely to turn out anti-Semitic. Here the most painstaking procedures have shown that to a considerable extent "it all hangs together." We will be right, most of the time, in dismissing the democratic protestations of a political figure who is a violent opponent of foreigners and immigration: and we should not be too much surprised to see him turn up in the anti-Semitic camp.

Far more should be said about these books; we have sought here only to give the outline of a massive work, and to suggest some of the lines which closer study and analysis might find it profitable to follow. Our thinking on the whole subject of prejudice in modern society is immeasurably richer by the possession of this new, major theory, and the impressive scientific evidence marshalled in its support; and these volumes will undoubtedly bear further fruit in the studies and investigations they will inspire. Certainly the paths opened up by this pioneering thinking and research are worth the fullest exploration.

LETTERS FROM READERS

The Jews in Montreal

To the Editor of Commentary:

Betty Sigler is to be congratulated for her stimulating and comprehensive survey of the Jewish community of Montreal ["Montreal: The Bonds of Community," in the April Commentary]. If the article is somewhat provocative and hurts where it stings, that is merely because of interpretation of the facts, and this young and searching writer is entitled to view this old and in many ways tradition-bound community with the candor of youth—and need I add, with youth's ingratiating and disarming intolerance?

As for the "*braite yiddenes* trudging home from Main Street with their shopping bags," if you looked closely you might find among them the blue-eyed blonde and brilliant Catholic daughter of a distinguished French Canadian family which has left its mark on Canadian history; or perhaps the outspoken and still active former national president of one of our leading national Jewish women's organizations. And the English with a strong Yiddish intonation is slowly giving way to the sound of impeccable French, German, and English, as spoken by the new influx of DP's from Europe.

Miss Sigler has failed to note the not insignificant role Jewish women have played in this community. To the two Montreal Jewish names which she counts among "the country's best," I would like to add that of Miss Ethel Starke, a young and brilliant violinist who is the founder and permanent conductor of the Montreal Women's Orchestra. Also Miss Violet Archer, another young Jewish musician-composer; and Gitta Caiserman, provocative young painter.

The Jewish women of Montreal, both as individuals and in groups, have done a considerable piece of work in breaking down barriers between Jew and Gentile. A number of Jewish women hold prominent and important positions in non-Jewish organizations; and such organizations as the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, the B'nai B'rith, the Jewish Junior Welfare League, have cemented strong bonds of friendship and mutual respect with other non-Jewish organizations in the tackling of common problems. Miss Sigler's own mother, through her work on the scholarship committee of the Montreal Section of Council, can attest to this ever-growing understanding among the French, Jewish, and English groups.

May I also add a footnote to this article. Since it was written, a Jewish aldermanic candidate is seeking election in the City of Outremont. This is happening for the first time in the history of that municipality and the contest is being watched with keen interest. Also steps are being considered for a test case to determine the legality of barring Jewish children from the public schools of a certain restricted suburb mentioned by Miss Sigler.

Council throughout Canada is deeply interested in the over-all picture of cooperation and understanding among all women in the community and it has done a considerable amount of work in that field. Miss Sigler's article gives us a clear and sharply crystallized picture of the largest and most complex Jewish community in Canada. Congratulations to her and to Commentary!

Anne Notkin

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada
Montreal, P.Q.

To the Editor of Commentary:

Betty Sigler's article is interesting but not altogether accurate.

Referring to B'nai B'rith, Miss Sigler states that "six years ago it opened the first Aleph Zadik Aleph chapter in Montreal." The AZA chapter was organized in this city about twenty-five years ago. AZA continued to grow and was eventually the nucleus for the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, which today numbers over one thousand members who meet regularly in its own Youth House.

In another section of the article, the author refers to lack of attendance at synagogue services on Sabbath mornings. Aside from the fact that the average small synagogue which can accommodate from one hundred to three hundred worshipers is usually more than half occupied every Saturday, there is also the large Adath Israel, a synagogue in Outremont which attracts upward of five hundred people to its regular Sabbath services. This is one of the exceptions not only in Montreal, but perhaps in any city, where a strong congregational spirit exists among the members largely because the rabbi, the cantor, and the choir take part in the services every Saturday.

In speaking of Montreal's artists, Miss Sigler names only Abraham M. Klein and Alexander Brott; she overlooks Miss Ethel Starke, founder and conductor of the Montreal Women's Symphony Orchestra, which we understand is the only one of its kind on the continent. Miss Starke is also one of the outstanding violinists in the radio and concert field.

The statement that local manufacturers have prospered because labor can be purchased at thirty-five cents an hour is unjustified and no longer true. This may have been a fact in pre-war days, but is certainly not so since 1940. . . .

H. J. HALPERIN

B'nai B'rith Youth Organization
Montreal, P.Q.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was delighted by Betty Sigler's highly informative, lively piece, "Montreal: The Bonds of Community." Particularly as she succeeds so well in combining objectivity with a subtle sense of humor. There is only one point with which I would like to quarrel: her use of the word "ghetto. . . ."

Miss Sigler describes the separate orbits of the British and French communities, the Protestants and the Catholics, in Quebec. If they have anything in common, she implies, it is that they keep the Jews at a distance. But when she describes the autonomous makeup of the Jewish community of Montreal she finds no word other than "ghetto."

The question arises, why is it proper for British and French Canadians to be "ancestor conscious," while a similar attitude on the part of Jewish Canadians calls for the word "ghetto"? Is the heritage of our forefathers less than that of the Canadians, either British or French? The question gains in pertinence when one considers that there are probably among the Jews of Montreal more individuals and groups that concern themselves with the life and cultural achievements of their fellow citizens, than there are Canadian British who have any interest in either French or Jewish culture, or Canadian French who have any active interest in the cultural values of the British or the Jewish communities.

Miss Sigler's account seems to imply that the still provincial English-French civilization of Quebec should be regarded by the local Jews as the "civilization" which is entitled to swallow the Jewish group as the seven lean cows in Joseph's dream swallowed the seven fat ones. Why should we think that the Canadian Jews, a branch of a great historic people, and the heirs of one of the most ancient, creative, and influential cultures in the world, should look upon their many-sided traditions and their inheritance as a narrow-minded isolationism to be designated by the word "ghetto"?

Even in those countries where ghettos literally existed, there were thousands and thousands of Jews who were not hindered by the ghetto walls from maintaining their world outlook and their understanding of universal values and ideals. Is there not more of a ghetto psychology in the habit of finding ghettoism in any autonomous Jewish group life, than there is in the actual existence of Jewish communities with a life of their own?

S. NIGER

Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Betty Sigler's description of the position of the Jewish community amidst two great cultures in Montreal is a realistic evaluation of Jewish life in this metropolis. The scene follows the pattern of other large centers in the United States where the various small groups within the larger minority group attempt to assert themselves. And since these groups are in most cases influenced by the variety of backgrounds brought from European cities, and because the new Jewish life has not taken root as yet in Canada, it often lacks consistency and appears "chaotic" to the eyes of a penetrating but young observer like Miss Sigler. But the older onlooker considers this as the natural development of the impact of the new surroundings on the rich and old Jewish culture transplanted to Canada, and does notice the wheels of progress in action.

Miss Sigler is to be commended on the mass of true facts she has gathered and on her presentation. If one can find fault it is not with any inaccuracies in her material, but with her failure to mention the role played by some institutions (such as the YM-YWHA and others) and the responsible leadership of which our "town within the city" may boast.

SAMUEL KAHN

Montreal, P.Q.

Abington Township

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After reading "The Battle of Abington Township" (COMMENTARY, March 1950), I have come to the depressing conclusion that the veteran group's otherwise gallant fight is completely nullified by its negative stand about including Negroes in the project.

I am referring to the statement attributed to Mr. Greenfield: "We wanted to let Negroes in—they're veterans too, you know. But we've been advised that big mortgage investors, unfortunately, will not take Negroes on a mixed project. There are no Negroes in the cooperative." This attempt at offhand irony hardly hides the fact that little thought was apparently given to the idea of admitting Negroes.

It seems grossly paradoxical that this veteran's group could fight so intrepidly against anti-Semitism and yet so lightly dismiss Negroes from participating in the cooperative. Perhaps I am wrong: perhaps the question received more of a hearing than Mr. Greenfield's simple statement leads me to believe. If so, I would like to know about it. As it stands now, those pacifying remarks to the country-clubbers of Rydal vitiate the whole project.

Elwyn Silverman

Bronx, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

Morton M. Hunt's splendid article in the March Commentary, describing "The Battle of Abington Township," mentions several individuals who played important parts in that battle; but—doubtless because of limitations of space—Mr. Hunt failed to mention the important part played by Lessing J. Rosenwald and his son, Julius Rosenwald II. Julius was a member of the original small group which formed the cooperative and served on its board of directors during the formative period. His father was the largest contributor to the fund which was raised to launch the project.

Mr. Rosenwald was the principal witness for the cooperative at the first meeting of the Township Commissioners. As the largest taxpayer in the township, owning 144 acres of land directly across Fox Chase Road from the cooperative's land, he declared his full support for the project. At a later meeting, before the Zoning Board of Adjustment of Abington, he again appeared as the cooperative's principal witness. On one occasion Mr. Rosenwald with his characteristic generosity pledged one-half of a construction fund of sixty-five thousand dollars to the cooperative, contingent upon the veterans raising the other half from other contributors. This fund was never raised, and only because the fight in the township prevented their proceeding with construction.

Throughout the township fight, Mr. Rosenwald consulted frequently with the leaders of the group, always ready to use his good offices on the cooperative's behalf. It is conceded by those thoroughly familiar with the situation that the cooperative could not have attained its ultimate victory without Lessing Rosenwald's staunch support.

Jacob Billikopf

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sociology and American Jews

To the Editor of Commentary:

The summary of the sociological findings in Nathan Glazer's article, "What Sociology Knows About American Jews," is, in my opinion, the most adequate and well-reasoned which we yet have in the field. . . .

With regard to Glazer's two main conclusions: First, that the Jews have advanced more rapidly than other ethnic groups; it seems to me that the full implications of this are not developed as much as they might be. If it is true, for example, that as an ethnic group the Jews have advanced more rapidly in the social scale, this might help to explain some of the stereotypes held of Jews by the dominant community, and some of the behavior characteristics which occur among Jews.

With respect to the second main conclusion, regarding intermarriage, is it not important to note, as Ruppin does, that the rate of endogamy is dependent upon the concentration of Jews within a certain community, and that the greater the concentration, the greater the endogamy? The estimates Ruby Kennedy gives from New Haven, of which Glazer makes so much, are evidence from a pretty highly concentrated Jewish community, which forms a large portion of the entire city, where we would expect a low rate of intermarriage. What we really need is more studies of this same kind both in large cities, where the concentration of Jews is more evident, and in smaller cities, where it is less evident. I believe that if this were done, we would see that endogamy is a function of group solidarity.

Finally, Glazer mentions in his last paragraph that there is need for more intimate sociology of Jewish life. My own observation is that the weakest aspect of the sociology of the Jews is a lack of family studies. There is only one monograph on the subject in English that I know of, and only one article in the sociological journals. . . .

If we are to understand the Jewish community at all, we must first begin with the family relationships; until then we shall lack the fundamental key to the entire subject.

R. A. Schermerhorn

Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio

To the Editor of Commentary:

I think Nathan Glazer's "What Sociology Knows About American Jews" an excellent assessment of the present state of sociological research concerning American Jews, and I am looking forward to his next article on the subject.

I should like, however, to take exception to his use of the term "Jewish sociology," and to his use interchangeably of the terms "Jewish sociology" and "sociology of the Jews."

"American sociology" or "German sociology" usually refers to sociology which has been produced by Americans in America or Germans in Germany, regardless of the subject matter. "Jewish sociology," in my opinion, is used correctly only in the case of sociological writings produced in Israel, and perhaps also in the case of sociological works written in Yiddish or Hebrew.

American sociologists who are Jews, as well as those who are non-Jews, writing sociological works in the English language, are producing American sociology, even if their writings be concerned with Jews. As to the term "sociology of . . .," this should be used sparingly, and only in the case of a well-recognized field.

Samuel Koenig

Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

I found Mr. Glazer's article intelligent, well done, and rewarding. . . . In his concluding article I hope Mr. Glazer will devote some attention to the criteria which he thinks research on American Jews should fulfill. He mentions in the present article the abundance of research on the American Negro. Does he think research on American Jews should follow the same pattern? Does it make sense scientifically to do a study of the Negro family? Or to put this another way, if a researcher were given fifty thousand dollars to do research on American Jews, should it be a study of the Jewish child or the Jewish adult? the Jewish family or the Jewish worker? Jewish personality or Jewish political patterns? From a scientific point of view, what are the most crucial areas of research and why?

Part of the same problem is to suggest, however tentatively, the limits of such research. Is there a point beyond which research on American Jews is merely precious? I have the impression that we have too much research on the American Negro. Rather than informing social action, it tends to paralyze it. In any case, I would like to see some discussion of this question.

Thelma Herman McCormack

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . As an American Jew and a sociologist, I see very little merit in Mr. Glazer's terms "Jewish sociology" and "American Jewish sociologists". . . . May I ask what is "Jewish sociology," and who are "American Jewish sociologists"? These terms seem to convey to the layman the false notion that if an American Jew is a sociologist, he is by definition concerned with the study of American Jews, and that Gentiles who are sociologists study Gentiles. Mr. Glazer's own references to the contributions of individuals such as Warner and Kennedy would show the contrary.

My other comments concern Mr. Glazer's remarks on assimilation and intermarriage. Although he does not formally define the term "assimilation," he appears to use it synonymously with "absorption" and "disappearance." With this in mind he asserts that when Jews marry non-Jews in large numbers they assimilate. All we have to test his assertion, for America, is the relatively small measured incidence of intermarriage between Jews and Gentiles, and the cases therein do not show that intermarrying Jews are inevitably absorbed by their Gentile mates. Indeed, in many cases the opposite is true, and the children of such marriages often marry back into the Jewish group.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that Mr. Glazer and others are handicapped by the fact that no scholarly findings are available as yet on American Jewish intermarriage since Dr. Kennedy's research in New Haven in 1940. It may be that Mr. Glazer's generalization that "Jews show very little tendency to assimilate: they intermarry less than any other ethnic group" lags behind the facts.

Milton L. Barron

Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

A Correction

In Emil L. Fackenheim's article, "The Modern Jew's Path to God," in the May issue, one line was dropped out, thus destroying the meaning of two sentences. These sentences, which ran from the bottom of page 453 to the top of page 454, should properly have read as follows:

"Modern man is tempted to describe it as the peculiar mental habit of a religious civilization. But this, if we truly try to understand the faith of our fathers, is an absurd prejudice."—Ed.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Martyrdom and Resistance

We Survived: The Stories of Fourteen of the Hidden and Hunted of Germany. As told to Eric H. Boehm. Yale University Press. 308 pp. $3.75.

The Root and the Bough. Edited by Leo W. Schwarz. Rinehart. 362 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by Monroe Engel

Reading survivors' stories now—survivors of Oswiecim, Bergen-Belsen, the Warsaw ghetto—one feels chiefly the paralysis of consent or credence: yes, one can believe these things happened, yet they do not provoke any immediate reaction. One remembers with a certain nostalgia the horror engendered by the first reports of what was happening to the German Jews in the mid-30's. Then, after the war had started, the reports became atrocity stories which bore just enough resemblance to the dismembered Belgian children of another war to make them suspect to the "enlightened" mind. With the end of the war, and the discovery of the crematoria, the gas chambers, the mass graves, the surviving victims, horror was possible once more. But it was not very long thereafter that a perusal of all the New York papers would give no indication that the Nuremberg trials were going on.

It would be something of a comfort to attribute this loss of "news interest," this loss of the power to move, to the distance of the war from America and the muting effect of an intervening ocean. Yet the real trouble is not this, but is an incapacity for sustained realization of horror that is inherent in the reactions of the very victims themselves: in their for the most part ever lessening ability to respond to the plight of their fellow-victims; in the conviction of many of them that no one *could* ever understand what had happened to them; in the need, for example, of Hayim-Meir Gottlieb to argue with his fellow Buchenwald survivors on June 21, 1945, that it was morally wrong for the survivors of the camps to have sexual relations with German women. If even the victims themselves suffer losses in their capacities for response, what hope is there for Americans who, with the exception of soldiers who served overseas, have seen only cows behind barbed wire?

One must feel a large debt of gratitude to Eric H. Boehm and Leo W. Schwarz for editing these two collections of survivors' stories. If they only rarely engender the kind of emotional armament one would like to possess, they do make available a kind of documentary armament that is of real value. The stories of *We Survived* are all of Germans, chiefly in the Berlin area. Most of the people who tell their stories are middle-class Jews who had enjoyed positions of some respect in the German community before the rise of Nazi power, who had been to varying degrees assimilated into Christian society, and in some cases even converted to Christianity. But the victims also include a Protestant clergyman named Eugen Gerstenmaier, an aristocrat named Lagi Countess Ballestrem-Solf, a German painter of Danish extraction named Knud Christian Knudsen. Jew or Gentile, the protagonists of the stories fall more pertinently, if roughly, into two general groups: the "U-Boats" and the resisters.

"U-Boat" was the slang name for the people who attempted to submerge, to destroy their identities in order to survive, the Jews or the politically suspect who invented false deaths for themselves in order to forestall real deaths. The procedure was fairly stylized: the apartment or house deserted when a raid seemed imminent; often suicide notes left behind and instructions for the disposition of bodies; a warning to all friends not to recognize the "dead people" in case of a meeting; the destruction or abandonment of all identification papers. But even if initially carried off, the role of the living dead was difficult to sustain. One could not legally buy food in Nazi Germany without a ration card, and ration cards were issued only to people who could establish a legal identity.

There were police checks on roads, trains, buses, and in all public places, for which it was necessary to produce identification papers. Sometimes bogus identification papers could be procured, in the name of someone who had died perhaps, or of some fictitious "Aryan," but more often the "U-Boat" had to avoid all situations in which an identity might be necessary. The spiritual dispossession of our age was incarnated in the flesh.

The resisters vary from those who committed minor acts of sabotage or non-cooperation or military malingering to those who, like Gerstenmaier, took a part in the plot against Hitler's life. One is impressed with these acts as one must always be impressed with demonstrations of courage (though it is a virtue we are just learning to value again). But over the narrators' telling of these events there hangs a pall of futility which, though it may be an emotion only of retrospect, seems to have had a destructive effect on the acts themselves. One suspects that the conspirators did not feel much hope of success even at the time—that they felt instead a kind of prideful will to martyrdom. And this is not the way revolutions are made.

Almost all the accounts in the Boehm collection have a stiff dignity in the telling that gives them a curious disparity with the events they are describing. It is an almost indescribable relief to come to the story of the crippled tailor Moritz Mandelkern who tells how he wept when his son was taken from him, and how frightened he was as he hid from the SS in a tiny attic room and realized that the house beneath him was in flames. Or when we learn that one of the resisters wrote a poem in his cell, just before he was hanged, with the last stanza:

The final arguments
Are not the hope or knife.
And those today our judges
Sit not on Judgment Day.

One realizes then that the failure to respond is a failure of communication as well as of capacity.

Schwartz in his collection uses only the stories of Jews, and for the most part Central European Jews, although there are also a couple of interesting accounts of the fate of Jews in Occupied France. His method differs from Boehm's in that instead of giving a comparatively few stories, and giving them complete, he gives selections from thirty-two different stories, and from a remarkable communal journal of a group of Buchenwald survivors who constituted themselves as the Kibbutz Buchenwald and eventually went to Israel. (Parts of this journal appeared in Commentary, June and August 1946.)

To go from Nazi Germany to the wartime ghettos of Warsaw and Vilna is a transition from suffering to activity, vitality. The Eastern European Jews had two advantages: they gave positive assent to the fact of their being Jewish and had not, whether through choice or necessity is not pertinent, to any great extent practiced or aspired toward assimilation; they were being oppressed largely by a foreign invader and not by the people in whose brotherhood they had formerly vested great pride.

What the people named Miedzyrzecki, Sutzkever, Bielski, Pupko-Krinsky, and Feigenbaum possessed was a hard core of anger, militancy. self-reliance, a capacity for the acts of desperation and the fantastic gesture. These may not be the highest virtues of a civilized society, but in a situation in which civilization rarely intruded, they constituted a kind of honor, and if they were not very instrumental in preventing destruction, they at least kept the Warsaw ghetto from being an abattoir: one could tell the victims were human beings, not cattle, because they resisted—resisted intellectually, morally, and physically.

Such a statement must necessarily be qualified, lest it seem to justify a certain enthusiasm for the act of violence in itself—an enthusiasm which only a few months ago lent the violent cruelties of the Sternists a glamor that was never accorded the battles of the Israeli Army. Probably the most complete record to date in English of the Warsaw ghetto's resistance is Bernard Goldstein's *The Stars Bear Witness* (Schwartz has a selection from this book, but the book was published in this country last year). Here it is made abundantly clear that the intent of the ghetto organization was not *per se* to kill Germans, but to save the lives of the Jews, and to form a secret army that might eventually help to free Poland from its invaders. The men and women who fought in the ghetto were committed not to destruction, but to life —on certain terms.

Yet the terms were severe, and one of the lone survivors of the Vilna ghetto, Mark Dworzecki, has written a remarkable dialogue with conscience in which he examines his survival to see whether it in any way involved a complicity in the deaths of his comrades. Here we come suddenly to grips with our own situation. David Rousset has envisaged the concentration camps as the most intense manifestation of a universal condition. The conceit, which is germinal, makes survivors of us all, and endows each of us with the survivor's burden.

Pattern of Integration

A SEGMENT OF MY TIMES. By JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER. Farrar, Straus. 270 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by ISRAEL KNOX

A SEGMENT OF MY TIMES is almost completely concerned with Judge Proskauer's career as a public figure. It is written according to an earlier and more modest pattern of autobiography and, with the exception of the initial chapters, his story merges into the events of which his activities have been a part. In the first two chapters, however, he does tell us something about his childhood and boyhood in Mobile, Alabama, and a little about his family. And these chapters are significant not only for what they say, but also for what they suggest as to the influence of the "Old South" upon one with a Jewish background and heritage.

In what manner did this influence show itself? For one thing, Southern regionalism led Judge Proskauer to the conviction that loyalty to a "segment" is not incompatible with loyalty to the whole. So it was not difficult, in later years, as he became acquainted with Jewish needs and problems, for him to realize with equal clarity that interest in the welfare of the Jewish people and devotion to America were not mutually exclusive. Secondly, *noblesse oblige,* as it prevailed in the South, may not always have been wholesome, but it could provide a governing sense of obligation, the same mandate that was formulated in the "Ethics of the Fathers," *Pirke Abot*—"Thou shalt not separate thyself from the community." Judge Proskauer heeded the mandate and interpreted it to apply to the Jewish community as well as to his city, state, and country. Thirdly, the Aristotelian notion of the "magnanimous man," of the "cultivated gentleman," took root on Southern soil as it did nowhere else in this land. If it had its pseudo-aristocratic—indeed, its dangerous—expressions, it could also induce one to care as much about making a life as about making a living; and it could help one to perceive that the values of the mind are a legitimate dimension of human experience. Judge Proskauer still cherishes his love of poetry and has not even given up the temptation of trying his hand at it occasionally, and music, art, and philosophy have continued to be natural elements in his world. One can only guess to what extent this respect for things of the mind —mingled with a high sense of Jewish dignity —has kept him from reducing Judaism to a mere creed, as some extreme Jewish antinationalists have done, and to what degree it has prompted him to bring together the concepts of Jewish culture and Jewish religion in his own view.

New York is the capital, so to speak, of America's Jewish community, but it is not all of that community. The South, to mention just one section, has produced a number of eminent Jews—noted as a group for their integrity and sense of social responsibility—*noblesse oblige,* in its highest connotation. Brandeis, Baruch, Ochs, Lehman, Gimbel, Lazarus, Straus are some of them, and Proskauer is of their company.

THERE is much discussion these days among Jews about "integration," and, if the word has relevance, here is an excellent and vivid illustration of it. Judge Proskauer's narrative is not divided into parts—one American and the other Jewish. It is a continuous narrative, and the transition from "American" to "Jewish" themes, and then back again, is always easy, natural, and not at all incongruous. No matter what he is writing about—Al Smith's presidential campaign or the establishment of the State of Israel —he is doing so out of the fullness of his heart and mind as a human being.

Though present odds may seem to be against it, it is not at all unlikely that, in the judgment of history, *A Segment of My Times* will be accepted as the autobiography of a representative American Jew. For Judge Proskauer's life is representative of a trend among American Jews, as yet uncrystallized philosophically, which, as it becomes articulated, is bound to play an increasingly significant role in the future. His attitude is that of the majority of ideologically "unaffiliated" Jews who feel and think, without inner conflict, simply as Ameri-

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can Jews. Like him, they are eager and glad to do what they can for Israel without subscribing to official Zionism. Like him, they do not, in the name of Israel, renounce the rest of the earth as Galut and they consider America to be their home. Like him, they freely acknowledge their kinship with the Jewish people everywhere and their commitment to Judaism as its religion. Finally, like him, they are beginning to appreciate the enormous task confronting us in shaping a Jewish community in America with resources sufficient for the survival and enrichment of our cultural and spiritual legacy.

It must, however, be repeated and stressed that Judge Proskauer is representative of a trend, of what may come to be (that is, if this trend is correctly appraised and directed), and not of an immediate actuality. It is a sad commentary upon our present condition that Judge Proskauer has been reproached by antagonistic Jewish camps both as a "nationalist" and as an "assimilationist." His autobiography ought to be required reading for all who lay claim to leadership in America's Jewish community and recommended reading for all who wish to gain some insight into what may come to be the outlook of tomorrow's American Jew, once we have outgrown present obsolescent categories.

Judge Proskauer's non-Zionism was not the result of an involvement in "ideology"—antinationalist, assimilationist, or anything else; it was a response rather to the impact of historical events and realities. Zionism was not in the mainstream of Jewish life in America until this recent decade. In 1943, on assuming the presidency of the American Jewish Committee, he was compelled to face the issue and to sift the wheat from the chaff. He deals with Zionism in a part of one chapter and with the establishment of the State of Israel in another chapter. These chapters are a model of lucidity and compactness. As a non-Zionist (but not an anti-Zionist) he scans briefly—and with meticulous fairness—the history of Zionism, the factors that called it into existence, the political status of the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe as contrasted with that of America's Jewish community (and how the differences affected their respective attitudes toward Zionism). In simple and precise language he points out the distinction between willingness to share in the building of Israel as a refuge and a home for Jews (out of need or choice), and extreme Zionism as a *Weltanschauung*, openly or tacitly proclaiming on principle Jewish homelessness outside Israel. He tells the story of the American Jewish Conference, presumably convoked to unite American Jews on a broad common program (such as overseas relief and opposition to the British White Paper), and how the Zionists imposed upon it their own program, thus making its subsequent dissolution inevitable.

Despite all this, Judge Proskauer's non-Zionism did not go over into anti-Zionism, and few American Jews, if any, did as much to win American approval for partition and for the State of Israel. Ben Gurion's assurance that Israel will never forget his "noble efforts" is definitive testimony. The narrative of these "noble efforts" is an exciting one, and it reveals far-sighted statesmanship and deep devotion to a cause and to a people.

Law and politics have been Judge Proskauer's central preoccupations, and there is nothing dull about the seven chapters in which he tells of his varied experiences as lawyer, judge, and politician (and friend of politicians), and there is solidity in his observations on some aspects of the courts, on crime and punishment, on the judicial process. These observations indicate a sort of concrete thinking, always pertinent to a specific goal or issue, and classificatory rather than analytical. It is the thinking of one who is not an anti-intellectualist, or contemptuous of ideas, but whose own preference is for what might be called "applied" rather than "reflective" thinking. These chapters—as well as others—contain short statements on policies and principles with regard to vital matters; they are of the nature of affirmations, and their value is primarily moral. As statements, their merit is clarity and consistency, and Judge Proskauer would be the first one to grant that their theoretical foundation is to be sought elsewhere.

There is here one chapter that has undoubted historic importance. Judge Proskauer was among Al Smith's closest friends and advisers and he knew Franklin Roosevelt long before he became president. (It was Judge Proskauer who prepared the draft of Smith's famous reply to a Protestant lawyer who held that as a Roman Catholic Smith could not, if elected president, abide by his oath to obey the Constitution, and it was at a conference with Judge Proskauer and Herbert B. Swope at Hyde Park that Roosevelt arrived at his decision to accept the gubernatorial nomination.) Judge Proskauer recounts here the "inside" story of the rift between Smith and Roosevelt, and although his sympathy and allegiance were all with Smith, he tells it with considerable detachment and balance.

It was not only loyalty that allied Proskauer with Smith. It was also the identity of their political beliefs. Judge Proskauer, too, feared that the New Deal was moving beyond reasonable limits and was weakening, in effect, America's economic system. The favorite conservative terms of that day reappear here, such as "dole," "boondoggling," and, indeed, Judge Proskauer is perilously near, at times, to those who would bracket any kind of large-scale planning with totalitarianism. And he cannot see how the "closed shop" fits into any political structure based on individual liberty. Here one is impelled to enter a demurrer. If the "closed shop," for example, is a violation of individual liberty, why then so are traffic laws. In both instances, the lesson to be learned—regardless of the particular instance—is that majorities too have rights, and there is no valid reason, logical and moral, why these hard-earned rights should be jeopardized by a negligible minority that has nothing to lose by complying and much to gain.

WHAT some may miss in Judge Proskauer's book is a more intimate awareness of Jewish life as seen from within, as a culture. "By the Waters of Babylon"—this phrase seems to haunt Judge Proskauer's memory, so it is possible that he misses it, too. Yet, on the whole, there is in this autobiography, written in the seventy-second year of its author's life, neither bitterness nor regret. There is abundant evidence that the life it portrays has been a good and useful life, according to the wise counsel in the "Ethics of the Fathers": "It is not for you to finish the whole task, nor, on the other hand, is it for you to shirk your portion of it."

Prophets and Priests

THE BIBLE AND MODERN BELIEF. By LOUIS WALLIS. Duke University Press. 176 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT GORDIS

DURING the last three decades, Louis Wallis has published a series of volumes (*Sociological Study of the Bible*, 1912; *God and the Social Process*, 1935; *The Bible is Human*, 1942) emphasizing one fundamental thesis—that the struggle of the Hebrew prophets against Canaanite religion in Israel was essentially social and economic in character, though expressed in religious terms. They fought to preserve in Palestine the old social ideals of nomadic society, mutual responsibility, a rough egalitarianism, and the communal ownership of property, all of which found their religious sanction in the worship of JHVH. Against these standards stood the individualistic and competitive economy of agricultural and urban society which expressed itself in the Baal worship (*Ba'al*= "master, owner"). That the activity of the Hebrew prophets had an important socio-economic basis had of course been noted by other scholars, such as Weber, Budde, Robertson-Smith, and Flight. It is the merit, and in a degree the drawback, of Wallis to have stressed this factor to the virtual exclusion of all others.

His present book, which comes to us with a jacket bearing an impressive list of encomia by Old Testament scholars, is an extension of these

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earlier studies. The author seeks to save for the modern age the Prophetic faith in "a God who is the champion of social justice and individual morality and who is in the thick of human history." To do so, Wallis believes, it is essential to eliminate the later inventions and manipulations of Jewish ecclesiastical scribes who gave the Hebrew Bible its present form. For he finds that all that is positive and Prophetic in the Hebrew tradition is Ephraimitic, i.e., from the Northern Kingdom prior to the Babylonian exile. The later Judean editors were antagonistic to the tribe of Ephraim and invented such ecclesiastical institutions as the wandering Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Passover festival described in Exodus and the bulk of the "priestly law" now imbedded in the Pentateuch.

The tribe of Judah did not appear in Hebrew history until David's period, Ephraim being the central factor until then. Hence, the battle for monotheism and social justice was fought by Northern prophets. First came Ahiah, who, Wallis believes, spearheaded the revolt against the oppressive rule of David and Solomon, to be followed by Elijah and Hosea. With the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, only Judah, in the South, remained as the custodian of these ideals. After the Babylonian Exile, they were preserved only because they were encased in the hard shell of priestly tradition and ritual.

Centuries later, Jesus again represented the revolt against ecclesiasticism. The famous parable of the Good Samaritan is interpreted as a polemic against the Judean priest and the Levite, who show no mercy to the victim of assault on the highway, and as a panegyric of the merciful Samaritan, who is a man of Ephraim. The social, anti-priestly emphasis in Jesus's teaching was not shared by Paul, whose concern was with individual salvation. Today, Wallis concludes, these two emphases must be reconciled if modern man is to solve the besetting problems of the age.

The present study is to be welcomed for emphasizing anew the organic relationship of social ethics and religious faith in the Hebrew prophets. This is especially needed today when current theological fashions over-generously surrender the present world to Satan and take mystical flight to more rarefied realms.

Many of Wallis's views, in less extreme form perhaps, are not altogether without support among scholars. It has also long been noted that the Northern Kingdom was considerably more important, in the material as well as the cultural sense, than our present Biblical sources would indicate. Having been compiled centuries after Ephraim had ceased to exist, the Hebrew Bible naturally reflects the attitudes and ideas of Judah, including its prejudice and hostility toward its erstwhile northern neighbor. The disposition of the tribes in a rectangle around the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and the order of the tribal offerings at the Dedication of the sanctuary, in both of which Judah has the most prominent role (Num. 2, 7), may, as Wallis argues, reflect this point of view.

Truth, however, often lies in the nuances, and it is here that Wallis fails to carry conviction. Thus he exaggerates this hostility between Judah and Ephraim, which was intermittent and fluctuating, and ignores the evidence of more fraternal attitudes, mirrored in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as well as the historical sources. The relationship was ambivalent, not one-sided.

An even more fundamental criticism is the fact that, reflecting the standpoint of three decades ago, which has become largely outmoded today as a result of archaeological discoveries and more intensive research, Wallis underestimates the value and veracity of tradition. The Oriental law codes and documents, Babylonian, Assyrian, Hittite, Hurrian, and Phoenician, now place the narratives and the legal enactments of the Pentateuch within the framework of Near Eastern civilization of the second millennium BCE and conclusively prove that they are not the inventions of late priestly authors, after the Babylonian Exile. Similarly, the Tabernacle and Ark in the wilderness have their analogues in the *mahmal* and *otfe,* sacred tent-like structures that were borne in the religious processions of the nomadic Arabs and reflected immemorial Semitic custom.

Nor is it true that the Prophets were humanistic ethicists and by that token were opposed to all formal worship. They differed widely from one another in their attitude toward ritual. They run the gamut from Amos, who has no kind word to say of ceremonial, through Isaiah, the "moderate" who beheld his Inaugural Vision in the Temple and opposed ritual when it was divorced from righteousness, all the way to Ezekiel, who himself wrote a ritual code for the new state. Neither can the role of the Prophets in building Jewish national spirit be ignored. For them, "particularism" and "universalism" as opposites would have been incomprehensible. They saw national loyalty and world citizenship as two concentric circles. Finally, the Prophets were great original spirits, but they were not creators *ex nihilo*. Undoubtedly, they deepened and extended immeasurably the dimensions of Hebrew religion, but they themselves always called upon the people to "return" to the God of Israel. This call would be as meaningless as it would be unjust, unless the people to whom they spoke already possessed, in however rudimentary a fashion, some sense of the unity of Israel as something more than an accidental conglomeration of tribes, and a tradition of faith in one God. It is this consideration, among others, which impels modern scholars increasingly to recognize the historicity and significance of Moses for Hebrew history and religion.

Wallis's glorification of Ephraim leads him to the denigration of Isaiah of Jerusalem, the mightiest intellect of the Prophets, to whom he refers only once, and then by the remarkable phrase "usual inaccuracy." Similarly he disregards the basic fact that Nathan, Amos, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Unknown Prophet of the Exile, and others, were all Judeans. Curiously enough, a contemporary scholar makes Nathan the source and origin of prophetic religion!

That the parable of the Good Samaritan is a pro-Ephraimic protest against the Judean priests and Levites is most unlikely. By the period of the Gospels, the kingdom of Ephraim had been dead for eight centuries. A far more plausible view of the parable is that of Halévy, who suggests that we have here a typical Jewish *midrash* which originally employed the classic Jewish divisions of "Kohen," "Levite," and "Israelite" still in use today, the moral of the story being that consideration of one's fellow men is the highest form of holiness. The early Church, in its resentment at the unwillingness of the Jews to accept Christianity, changed the identity of the hero of the Parable from "Israelite" to "Samaritan," a quasi-Jewish sect, whom Jews often regarded as half-caste and with whom their relations were often hostile. This was a product of the same anti-Jewish bias in the New Testament which portrays Jews not merely as rejecting the divinity of Jesus, but as guilty of his death.

It should be added that in spite of the widespread popularity of the phrase, the "social

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gospel" of Jesus is an exaggerated idea. Genuine as is the sympathy expressed in the Gospels for the poor and the downtrodden, and vigorous as is their denunciation of the rich, they cannot rival the social utterances of the Hebrew prophets either in depth or extent. Even more serious is Wallis's failure to recognize the realistic social idealism of the priestly legislation in the Pentateuch, which includes the sabbatical year, the Jubilee, and other provisions in which there inheres a spirit relevant to our own day.

Various other details are subject to differences of opinion, as is only to be expected. But when Wallis's principal thesis is stripped of its over-simplifications and exaggerations, it is stimulating and sound. The student of religious history will appreciate the emphasis upon the far greater role that Ephraim played in Hebrew life and thought than we can now recognize. And the general reader will be grateful for the insight gained into the role of the Hebrew prophets in all its depth. For they were unyielding enemies of Baal worship, sexual depravity, and economic injustice, all of which they persisted in regarding as phases of the same evil order that had to be, and ultimately would be, overthrown.

A Poetic Imagination

THE BREAKUP OF OUR CAMP, AND OTHER STORIES. By PAUL GOODMAN. New Directions. 160 pp. $1.50.

Reviewed by HARRY FELTENSTEIN, JR.

THE stories in this serious little collection differ considerably in their success, but their similarity of tone is remarkable. Each is colored by regret—for opportunities missed, subtleties unperceived, isolation unbreachable—and through them winds a sinuous and sometimes tenuous suggestion of hidden significances. Mr. Goodman is a poet as well as the author of several volumes of fiction and nonfiction, among them *The Grand Piano, The Facts of Life,* and *Kafka's Prayer.* In this book he has made a number of statements about men's lives in terms which are part naturalistic, part symbolic, and often poetic.

About two-thirds of *The Breakup of Our Camp* is made up of the long short story from which the book takes its title, a report in the first person by Matt, the dramatics instructor, of the last days of a Jewish boys' camp situated on the shore of Lake Champlain. A young canoeist—a French Canadian—paddling across the lake, hears the boys singing around their campfires, stops to investigate, is met and welcomed by Matt, and quickly made at home by all the boys. When, in a day or so, it appears that Armand, the canoeist, is entranced by the camp and means to stay indefinitely, the boys grow cold, quite as Matt had grown soon after he had welcomed him on the very night of his arrival. Armand is aware of their change of heart; he packs his few belongings and leaves in his canoe, paddling away into a storm, in which, it is made clear, he is drowned.

Soon the camp breaks up, the boys return to the city, and Matt goes on his way, hitchhiking to no place in particular, to "poke into Massachusetts and New Hampshire for a day or two." As he waits for his first ride, he sees a signpost across the road and on it reads not the distances to the towns along the road, but a chronology in which the center point, "The Creation of the Universe," is *now.* The meaning of the refrain *V'im lo achshav, eimatai?*—"And if not now, when?"—which has recurred here and there in the story, is thus given its final extension. For Matt's tears, which recur with each recurrence of the refrain, are for the world, which is re-created at each moment, but in which the blight of every possibility is every instant foreseen. Matt, whose departure and subsequent injury in an automobile accident are symbolically parallel to Armand's departure and death, is as doomed as Armand and will not have the moment of glory of paddling off into the storm.

THE other stories are slighter and less successful. In "A Prayer for Dew" the honor of opening the Ark is bid for. (This story, when originally printed in COMMENTARY, was attacked as a

". . . For everyone interested in the history of the study of the Hebrew language, the study of Hebrew culture in its earlier or in its contemporary forms, or the study of Biblical literature in American colleges, Professor Katsh's careful and scholarly analysis should be of lasting value. . . ."
—Thomas Clark Pollock, Dean
Washington Square College of Arts and Sciences
New York University

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specimen of "negative Jewishness." It is difficult, and perhaps pointless, to say whether Goodman is "negative" or "positive"—but Jewish he certainly is.)

In the story "Vic McMahon" there is a sudden climactic tragedy, which destroys a little world and shows the solitude of men behind all the illusions of their intimacy. In "Terry Fleming—or, Are You Planning a Universe?" a small unfortunate boy, whose father is in jail, creates his own universe, and rules for the creation of universes are given: love all your creations; have pity on them; don't grow discouraged with them; stick to the job of creation, for no matter how little a universe yours is, it's worth all your efforts. In "The Joke" the sorrow of the isolation from one another of even the closest partners is briefly portrayed. "The Mean, the Maximum, and the Minimum" seems to suggest that there are no rules of life which the dialectic of living will not confute or transform. "The Handball Players" uses a handball game as a trope by which an attitude toward life is expressed: that, in short, in the pattern of everyday life, within its social rules, are to be found by each man all the virtues and profundities that the greatest of heroes may perhaps find in the most prodigious of events. "The Birthday Concert" describes the revelation to himself of a man's final failure. "Gamblers" is an epitome of an ontology in which the gamblers, the dealers, and the onlookers constitute the world.

Among the recurrent themes in Mr. Goodman's work are those concerned with the absolute importance of a man's work, no matter what it is, and the personal necessity of his seeing it through—not to *its* end, but to *his* own; the recreation of the world at every moment for and by each man, and, therefore, each man's final tragic and marvelous autonomy; and the necessity for a man to feel the most general human sympathy, amounting almost, in the world as it is, to a general unrequited love. Such themes can be expressed with more or less richness of suggestion in stories or parables; Mr. Goodman, in his shorter pieces, has attempted to join these two forms, which, while not widely different on the surface, can be joined only to the hurt of each, the succinctness of the parable and the verisimilitude of the story being equally lost, so that it is no more proper to call "The Handball Player" a story than it is to call "Terry Fleming" a parable; both pieces are rather ratiocinative literary vehicles, which express with a certain amount of evocative vigor general ethical theses with which it would be foolhardy to disagree.

In the story "The Breakup of Our Camp" the characters and their activities and the more considerable imaginative richness of the narrative sustain the symbolism in a manner the shorter pieces can not equal; for, in these, tones and gestures often take the place of content, and the symbolism becomes so general and so loosely bound to the situation that it lacks impact, its significance now and then appearing merely adventitious. The least successful of Mr. Goodman's stories, however, is, at worst, a qualified disappointment, for there is present in each some insight, some revelation of disaster, some new uncovering of the similarities in apparent dissimilars; while in the most successful—in "The Breakup of Our Camp"—there is the happy expression of a sensitive poetic imagination.

To America!

In Search of Freedom: A History of American Jews from Czechoslovakia. By Guido Kisch. With a Foreword by Jan Masaryk. London, Edward Goldston. 373 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by Sholom J. Kahn

This scholarly but fragmentary book is a first attempt to explore systematically a neglected group among what Oscar Handlin has called

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"Our Unknown American Jewish Ancestors" (COMMENTARY, February 1948).

Most hackneyed is the section — perhaps inevitable in such labors of love—on "Contributions of Czechoslovak Jews to American Civilization." The roll call of distinguished individuals is impressive, including, in Jewish community life, such names as Isaac M. Wise, Benjamin Szold (father of Henrietta), Leo Jung, Louis D. Brandeis, and Isidore Singer (editor of the *Jewish Encyclopedia*); there were also three admirals in the United States Navy, lawyers, statesmen, Joseph Goldberger (the doctor who licked pellagra), Abraham Flexner, Hans Kohn, Joseph Bulova, Leopold and Marc Eidlitz (New York architects), Otto Eisenschiml (chemist who wrote about Lincoln), Max Maretzek (pioneer of New York opera), Franz Werfel, William Steinitz (world chess champion), and many others.

This section is heavy on facts and light on historical analysis, except for such a typically apologetic remark as that all the professional and business men "pursued an ideal aim, each in accord with his own personal interest." The selected bibliography contains ten pages of listings concerned with individuals and families; but this reader, for one, was grateful that the author had *not* been able to compile "a complete list of all prominent American Jews of Czechoslovak descent"; that would not be history, but pedantry. There must be some middle way in historical writing between glorification of miscellaneous heroes and statistical surveys.

OF GREATER interest is the part which analyzes the causes of Jewish emigration to America from Bohemia. Czech nationalism, which came to a head in the fateful year of 1848, found expression in the works of two young Jewish poets, Moritz Hartman and Siegfried Kapper. But when the latter's *Bohemian Leaves* appeared in 1846, it was brutally attacked by the poet Karel Havlicek Borovsky as un-Czechian: since Kapper was a Jew, how could he truly love the Czech fatherland? Such rebuffs, together with anti-Jewish riots in Prague, led to the movement toward emigration, some of whose documents Professor Kisch includes among his appendices. (One group of these documents appeared in COMMENTARY, March 1949, under the title "To America!")

Those who took the Atlantic voyage were ardent devotees of freedom and possessed "a strong combination of Jewish tradition and European civilization"; the former "kept them from surrendering their identity while their European tradition facilitated the rapid process of their cultural acclimatization and assimilation." Louisville, Kentucky, became a notable center, the home of the Dembitz, Brandeis, Taussig, and Flexner families, and the process of Bohemian-Jewish Americanization is perhaps best exemplified in the career of Louis Dembitz Brandeis.

Mention should be made of the book's treatment of Thomas Masaryk's relations with Jews, Adolph J. Sabath's part in inducing President Wilson to support the cause of Czechoslovak independence, and of Dr. Kisch's detailed notes and bibliography, which should be useful to future scholars. However, much of this rich material still remains undigested, and we must share the author's hope "that the historical facts presented here will not escape the attention of competent sociologists." The oversimplification of Spanish, German, and Russian waves of immigration is happily being broken down, but we still need to learn more precisely what distinguished the Bohemian Jew from the German Jew, both here and in Europe. Dr. Kisch has made the indispensable beginning.

Counselor of Moderation

REASON AND LAW: STUDIES IN JURISTIC PHILOSOPHY. By MORRIS RAPHAEL COHEN. The Free Press. 211 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

MOST of the miscellaneous articles and book reviews now reprinted in this volume were originally published in legal or philosophical journals between 1912 and 1946. In that context they provided a generation of professional readers with refreshment. Many a law student dutifully thumbing a law journal welcomed an essay by Morris Raphael Cohen as a window looking out from the dusty legal workshop to the open air of philosophy. Morris Cohen's talent was for opening vistas; and it is doubtless this which made him one of the great teachers of his generation.

But the appearance of these items between a single set of covers invites us to look for their common point of view: to estimate Morris Cohen not simply as a man who could break windows out of prisons which other men built for themselves, but as a constructor of some kind of philosophical edifice of his own. Considering the extended period over which the essays in this volume were written and the variety of their subject matter, one could not fairly expect them to give us anything more than a clue to the style in which Morris Cohen in his later years thought philosophies should be built. Yet we do find a consistency that is surprising.

Morris Cohen's persistent plea is for moderation and empiricism. He warns against passionate devotion to any philosophical system—even to moderation and empiricism themselves. His method, familiar also in the writings of his cousin-in-philosophy John Dewey, is to pose a pair of polar opposites, and then to show that the opposition is a false one, either because both poles are equally true, or because they are not exclusive. A characteristic example is his critique of Justice Holmes's well-known dictum that "the life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience." On this Morris Cohen remarks, "The life of the law is not the kind of experience that can dispense with logic and consistency. Once we get rid of the false assumption that experience and logic are mutually exclusive, we can express the precise truth of our dictum by saying that logic is necessary but not by itself sufficient for the human experience we call law." Such a criticism is, of course, literally correct; but also, for any but the literal-minded, it is irrelevant. Under the respectable guise of philosophic precision it empties Holmes's statement of poetry, vigor, and suggestiveness.

Again and again, as for example in his essay on "Absolutisms in Law and Morals," which is by far the most significant of the pieces reprinted in this volume, one has the feeling that the author's assertions are quite true, but not profoundly helpful. Too often his critical observations seem valid only because he has attributed an oversimplified position to his opponents. Thus he concludes after comparing the "absolutist" and the "anarchistic" theories of law, "The truth, then, is that only the love of absolutism or undue simplicity prevents us from seeing that the actual facts fit into neither theory. Men do want the traffic laws and also want to disobey them." Or, as he remarks elsewhere, "The law is an ancient institution. As is true of other human arrangements, there are people who regard it as divine. They speak of the law as if it all emanated from Sinai. But while there may be some law that emanated from Sinai, surely that is not the origin of all the legislation that we have today, nor of all judicial decisions. On the other hand, it is equally absurd to regard all law as essentially iniquitous. Let us recognize that while pure white light and absolute darkness are abstract elements of the human scene the actual colors of life are mixtures."

In Morris Cohen the proverbial academic preoccupation with steering the middle course was transformed into a kind of obsession with ambivalence. While he seems to have been convinced that there is some validity in all values which men assert, he seems equally uncertain how any of us may know where such validity stops. His was a mind of extraordinary honesty and of incisive critical powers; but it was a prosaic kind of honesty which was reluctant to admit the superior accuracy of metaphor. Profoundly aware as he was of the limits of all particular philosophies, he was less aware of the limits of the language of philosophy. His significance comes very much from the unwitting eloquence with which he expresses the spirit of his age. Like other intellectual leaders of his generation in America, he was a vigorous and effective denouncer of false prophets. But, great teacher though he was, he seems to have lacked that full measure of wit and of the poetic sense —in recent decades shared by men as different as William James and Alfred North Whitehead —without which the philosopher himself can hardly play his proper role as prophet.

Book Reviewers in this Issue

Monroe Engel has written for Commentary, the *Nation*, and other periodicals.

Israel Knox, assistant professor of philosophy at Ohio University, is a frequent contributor to Commentary.

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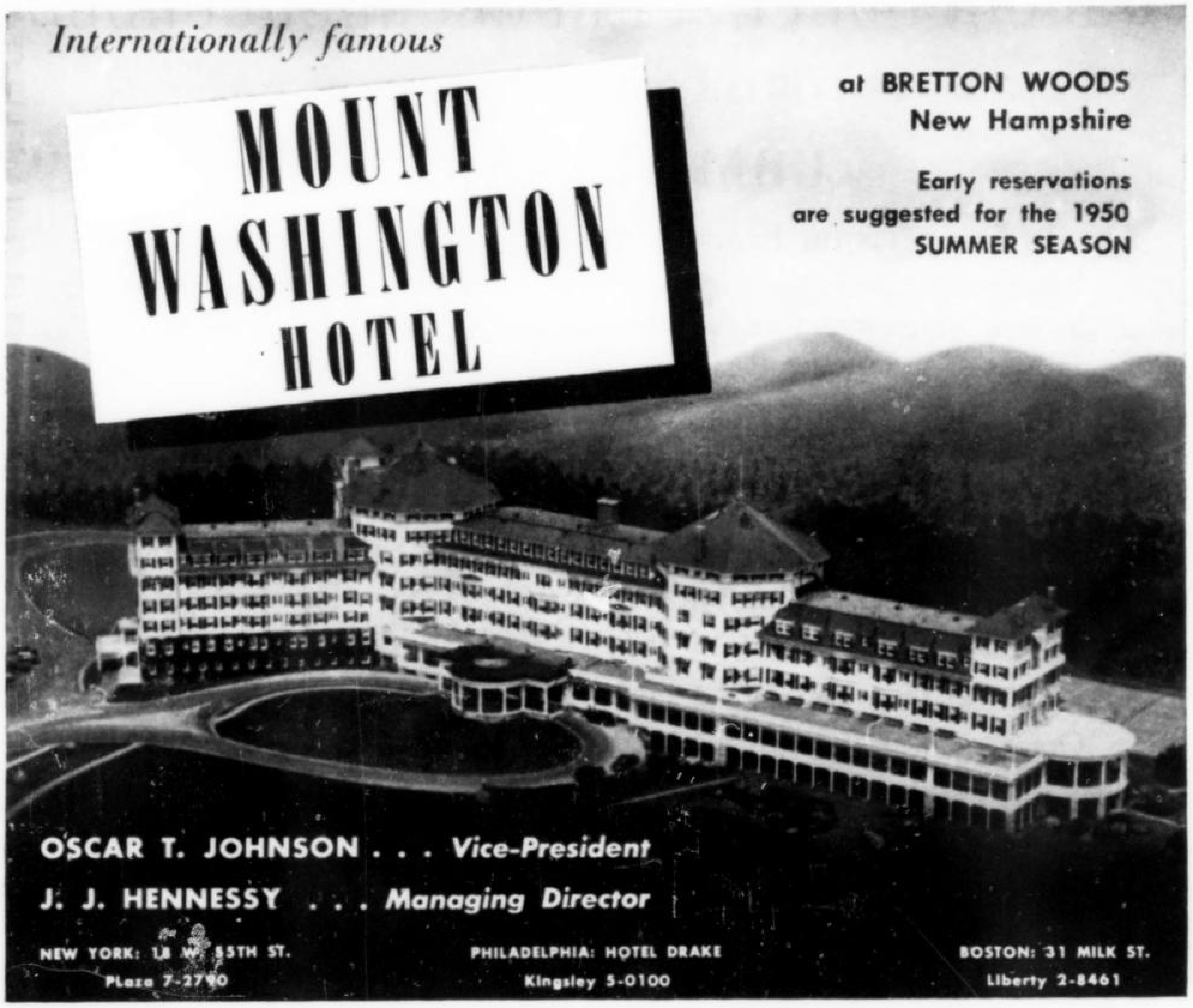

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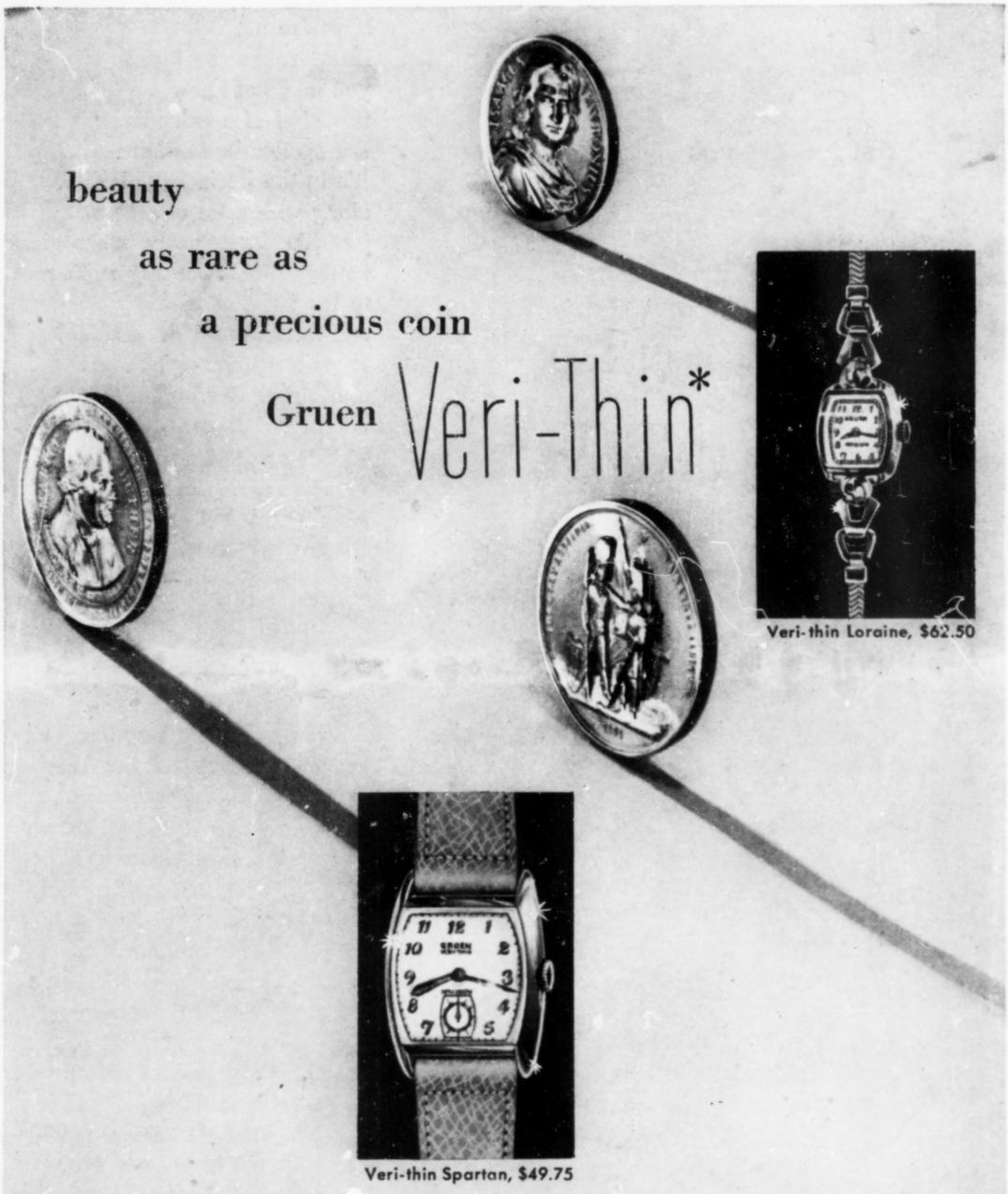

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